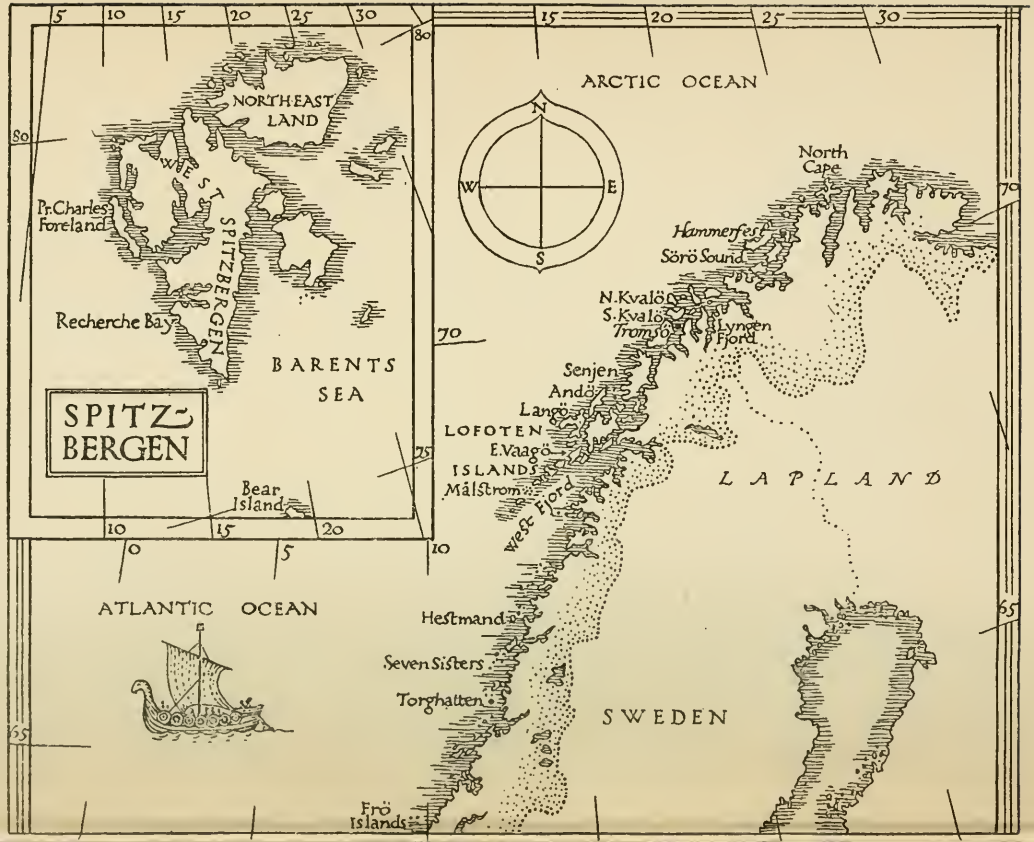
NORWAY
AND ITS FJORDS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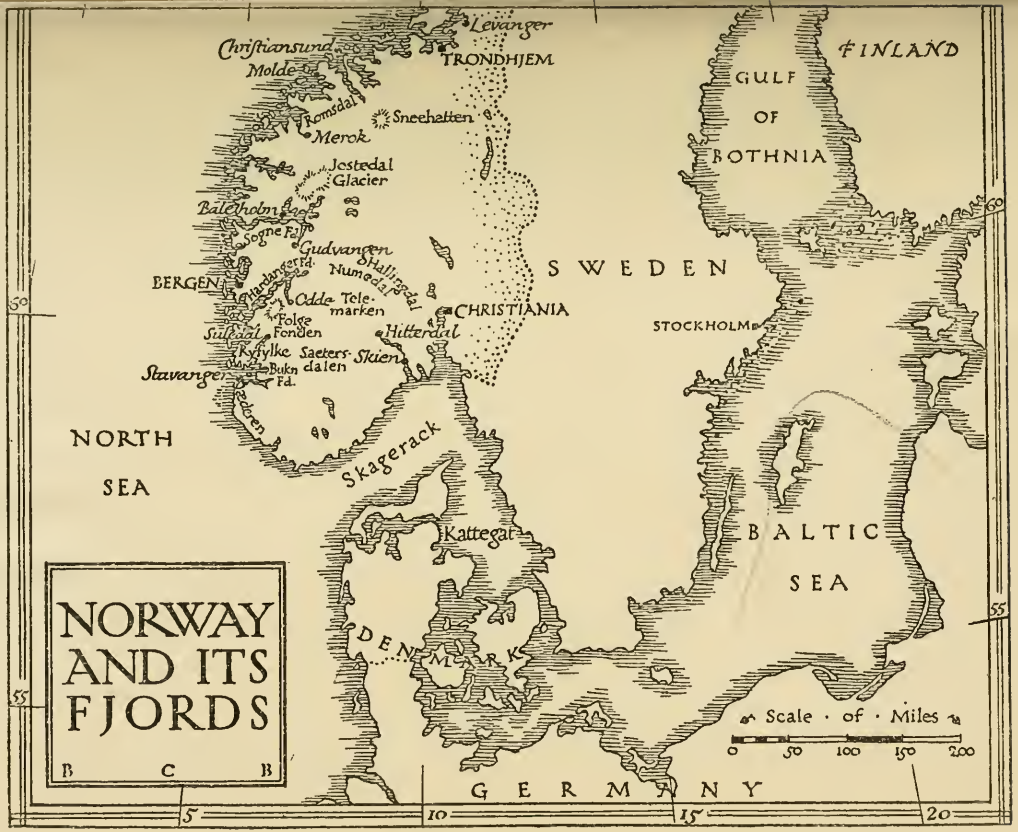
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Hallingdal
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BERGEN
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Folge Fonden
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NORWAY AND ITS FJORDS

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THE LOG OF *THE LADYBIRD*

LONDON TO THE NORE

'VECTIS' AT CHRISTIANIA

NORWAY AND ITS FJORDS

BY

M. A. WYLLIE

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGES

The charm of the open sea—The pilot—The shelter of the Fjord—Gogstad and the Viking ship—*Alf*, the timber ship—Drammen—Oscarborg—Carl-Johans Gaden—The Viking ship—Gear and the sepulchral chamber—Old burials — Funeral rites — Hervör rouses Angantyr — Angantyr threatens—Tryfing is flung to Hervör . . 1–16

CHAPTER II

Christiania—Ancient and modern art—Early painters—Dahl, Fearnly, Baade, and Frich—Adolf Tidemand—Gude, Cappelen, Carl S. Hansen — A gruesome story — An execution—Collet, Ender, Otto Sinding—Three brothers, Heyerdahl, Krohg—Erik Werenskiold—Fritz Thaulow —Eyolf Soot, Gustav Wentegel—Peasant-born sculptors —Mathias Skeibrok, Stephen Sinding—Casts from the antique 17–31

CHAPTER III

Christiania — Holmenkollen — Oscarshal — The fairy-tale room — A Norwegian winter — Notable men — Cleanly Christiania—The oldest railway—Lake Miosen—George Bidder the calculating boy—Gudbrandsdal—The saeter of Mork — Phyllis of the uplands — "Gammel ost"— Lonely farms—The store-house—Longing for saeter life 32–47

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CHAPTER IV

PAGES

Laurvik — Colin Archer the shipbuilder — The *Fram* — Nansen's simple means to attain his end—Skien—Henrik Ibsen—The Saetarsdal—Saetarsdal costume—The oldest glen in Norway—Christiansand—Oft-painted Jäderen—Stavanger — Stavanger cathedral — Karmo — Kopervik, Haugesund—Restless waters—Flatholm Fyr and Hafsfjord 48-61

CHAPTER V

The wondrous, beautiful Hardanger—A stony intruder—The Barons of Rosendal—The Folgefond—Crossing the Folgefond—Sondefos—Horses manage the climb—Odde, the end of the Sör Fjord—Waterfalls in the environs of Odde—Utne—The Thing — Oksenfjeld — King Utne's runic stone — Delightful Norheimsund — Musical surroundings—Hunt the fiddler—Strephon—A descendant of Ole Haugen—The Hardanger violin—Medaas, Isak Nilson of Boteren—The Öfsthus Fos in sunlight—An uninterrupted view of the river . . . 62-83

CHAPTER VI

National dances—The Battle of Svold—The polska—The halling dance—A panacea for *mal-de-mer*—Awaiting Olaf's ship—Anger of Eirik Jarl—The real *Long Serpent* —Sigvaldi Jarl manœuvres—In battle array—Ulf replies —Olaf fights most boldly—The doings of Eirik Jarl—Desperate fighting—Comes Hyrning with his followers —Thorkel's advice—Success of Thorkel's advice—Great is the Jarl's luck—King Olaf dies . . . 84-101

CHAPTER VII

Bergen on the By Fjord—Sinding's monument—Ole Bull—Madame Malibran—Adelina Patti—Death of Ole Bull —The laurel wreath — A study of human nature—

PAGES

Tydskebryggen—Modern Vikings—Defrauded Jepsab—The Hanseatic House—History of the League—Decline of the trade—The primitive jagter—Queer seamanship—Old-time battles—Description by Samuel Pepys—Ludvig Holberg—His early life—His death . . . 102–122

CHAPTER VIII

Bergen—Grieg—Music—The Nordaasvand—Edvard Grieg—Troldhaugen—"Just a bar, please"—Grieg's forebears—The influence of Ole Bull—Richard Nordraak—"Jeg elsker dig"—Franz Liszt—*Peer Gynt*—Sör Fjord—Bolstad Fjord—The Vosse-Elv—The ceremony of name-fastening—Voss—Verdandi, Norse representative of the present—Voss Church—The old Finneloft—Hrolf Blakar—Adieus to Voss 123–143

CHAPTER IX

The Sogne and Naero Fjords—Aurlands Fjord—"Let go"—Carioles and stolkjaerre—Fjord horses—On the road to Stalheim—Stalheimsklen—Great Jardalsnut—The road to Bakke—Norwegian cattle—A perfect rainbow—Fjaerlands Fjord and Mundal—Böjumsbrae—Suphellebrae—Alone at the foot of Böjum—The haunt of the Jotnar—Balholm—King Bele's Bautasteinar—Runatal—Odin's Song—What Odin learned from the runes—An artistic home—Time and tide wait for no man . 144–166

CHAPTER X

Loen, Merok, Naes, and Molde—Hornelen—Loen—Lake Loen—Turf-roofed gaards of Naesdal—Nonsnib—Kjendal—Merok—A zigzag road—"Cherrmans to dee front"—Geiranger Fjord—Under the shadow of mighty cliffs—The Romsdalhorn—The valley of the Roma—The Mongefos—How the water falls—Molde—Molde Fjord—Charming surroundings—Björnstjerne Björnson—Pure peasant stories—Voluntary exile—Jonas Lie—Alexander Kielland 167–190

CHAPTER XI

PAGES

Trondhjem and its Kings—Trondhjem Cathedral—Advice to visitors—Back to comfort—We are of one tongue—The bard as an historian—Scandinavia and ancient Greece—Heathen gods—Old records—The Peace of Frödi—Trondhjem and its Kings—Harald's vow—The Norman March—Rolf Ganger—"The Ballad of Rou"—The Norman Flood—Harald Harfagre—Haakon the good Christian—Olaf Tryggvason—Halfred the Scald—His song of the heathen gods—Saint Olaf—Magnus and Harold Haardrada—The Vaeringers—Peaceful Kings Olaf and Eystein—Troublous times—Bernadotte—The Storthing—King Haakon VII.—Military service—The new militia 191–221

CHAPTER XII

Torghatten—Mrs. Pilot—Narvik—Lofotens—Tromsö and Lyngen—Hestmann and the Sisters—The bolt that sped—The pilot's wife—Lofoten Islands—Hardy Norsemen—Torfisk and Klipfisk—The world's consumption of dried fish—Vaags Fjord—Tromsö—Midnight—Clustering pinnacles—Lyngen—Lapp Encampment—Lapp clothing and ornaments—A Lapp baby—Balto and Ravna—Lapp boots—An Englishman's experience—Home life amongst the Lapps—A warm, dry shelter—The Kota—The tent—A picturesque group—Norway's desert boundary 222–246

CHAPTER XIII

Hammerfest and North Cape—Sörö Sund—Dr. de John's dark brown cod-liver oil—Nansen's welcome—Meridian-stötte—Fog—The Bishop's belief in the *kraken*—Octher "encreases knowledge"—Hjelmsö—North Cape flora—Norwegian trees and flowers—Wild animals—Hans Haugen—Homes of the elk deer and glutton—Lemming—Lemming seek submerged Atlantis—A Lemming year—*Linnæa borealis*, national flower—Reindeer moss—Eider-duck rugs—Warm and comfortable 247–267

CHAPTER XIV

PAGES

Eozoön—The Devonian Age—Triassic and Jurassic times—The Ice Age—Deep fjords—Neolithic man—Early workmanship—Jötnar and Thursar—Icelandic poets—Eddas—Sagas—Aud, Queen of Dublin—Burnt Njal—The beardless carle—Bergthora's avengers—Sigmund—Skarphedinn sings a mocking song . . 268–285

CHAPTER XV

Spitzbergen—The life-giving Gulf Stream—The phantom ship—The hardy hunter—H.M.S. *Callipso*—Famine bread—The Fox and East Glaciers—Cutting up whales—Fulmar petrel—A whaler—Fauna—Poor *Balæna boops*—The snow bunting—The height of the midnight sun—Latitude 80° 24′ N.—Prince Charles's Foreland—The beliefs of the Vecti—The daughters of Ran—The coast of Britain—The Thames once more . 286–306

INDEX 307–315

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

IN COLOUR

The *Vectis* at Christiania	*Frontispiece*	
Timber Barque off Stavanger	*Facing page*	6
Christiania from Holmenkollen	„	33
The Folgefond from Norheims Sound	„	75
Bergen from the Pudde Fjord	„	102
Tydskebryggen, Bergen	„	110
House of Edvard Grieg and the Nordaasvand	„	125
Vossevangen	„	136
Naerodal	„	151
Balholm on the Sogne Fjord	„	160
Loen Elv	„	170
Trondhjem	„	191
Lofoten Islands	„	226
Tromso (Midnight)	„	232
Hammerfest	„	249
Graves of Norwegian Whalers, Recherche Bay	„	291

IN MONOTONE

Viking Ship found at Gagstad, near Sourde Fjord	„	10
Beds found in the Viking's Ship	„	10
"Sisters"	„	25

By Hans Heyerdahl

CARVED DOOR FROM OLD CHURCH AT HALLINGDAL . . . . . *Facing page* 29
"NORWEGIAN WINTER'S DAY" . . . „ 35
By Fritz Thaulow
"A SOLITARY COUPLE" . . . . „ 45
By Adolf Tidemand
"MELTING SNOWS" . . . . „ 58
By Fredrik Collet
"THE BACHELOR" . . . . „ 85
By F. Fagerlin
CARIOL AND FJORD HORSE, NAERODAL . „ 147
NONSNIB, LAKE LOEN . . . . „ 172
"THE FUNERAL OF A PEASANT" . . „ 183
By Erik Werenskiold
TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL . . . . „ 194
"FROKOST" (BREAKFAST) . . . „ 220
By Gustav Wentzel
"SCENE IN THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS" . . „ 228
By Otto Sinding
DRYING STOCK FISH . . . . „ 235
THE FJELD LAPPER| OF THE NO-MAN'S-LAND THAT DIVIDES NORWAY FROM SWEDEN . „ 244
THE WHALER'S HARPOON, SPITZBERGEN . „ 298

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NORWAY AND ITS FJORDS

CHAPTER I

THE CHARM OF THE OPEN SEA

THERE are many ways of seeing Norway,—by liner, fjord steamer, yacht, or on foot. Perhaps it is possible to see most and to learn most by walking, and the help of the post steamer. But then time is needed, and time nowadays goes quicker than of yore, so that I am inclined to think that our way was the best, namely, boarding the *Vectis*, as she lay in midstream on the Thames, with bag and baggage.

One feels like the snail whose shell forms a part of him, that in this great big ship "Home" was always at hand, which added greatly to both pleasure and comfort. It was wonderful to see how men and women, who had come on board more or less weary and jaded from too hard a London season, overworked from a long session in Parliament or in office, revived after a day or two spent at sea. They lay drowsily extended in various positions of comfort on their chairs on the broad white after-deck, the happy moment after lunch; too soon to get to work or play, the tremor of the great screw acting as the mother's foot on the cradle rocker.

The deck was partly in shadow, partly in sunlight,

with a delightful breeze ruffling the surface of the blue sea, and the long white wake streaming away to the horizon. Care was left behind. The stress and hurry of everyday life, like the ship's wake, receded in the distance. We looked calm enough now, basking in the sun with no thought of to-morrow, content to drink in the invigorating forces of air, sea, and sky. The ship's kittens gamboled silently, dodging in and out under the chairs of the sleepers; every now and then the gong throbbed as the watching figure in the bow, standing like a black statue, caught sight of a ship to port or starboard.

I really think this is what yachting should be—no responsibility, no guests to keep amused, plenty of nice people, and punctual meals.

Norway had been discussed, and books referred to and read, whilst the ship steadily forged ahead. But all passes. The sky that looked so blue the day before had slowly become overcast, the sea too was distinctly rising, the frothy wake no longer stretched straight to the horizon, but, like a wounded snake, coiled and curved restlessly. The sea, a deep indigo, rose in waves capped with transparent green and white feathery crests, with a great under swell rolling in from the west like some grand bass motif underlying the music of the lesser turmoil.

It was clear that the ship was no longer under the protecting shelter of the Skaw,—and the stormy Skagerak open to the west acted as a highway to the ocean swells. Through the driving mist appeared quite a fleet of sturdy Norse double-ended fishing boats with their foresails a-weather, snugging down as they tacked backwards and forwards over the mackerel shoal. Each carried four long spars resembling great fishing rods, which gave the craft a spider-like appearance.

One small boat detached itself from the fleet, evidently trying to intercept our ship. She had a red cloth down the middle of her white mainsail, the distinguishing mark of the Norse pilot. As the pilot approached he threw out enormous fenders, great hairy things, masses of rope yarn threaded on chains, but he omitted to hoist his flag. The officers of the watch, not grasping his intention to board, did not give the word to slow in time, and the poor pilot went bobbing astern, tossed up and down on the great sea. Though we turned astern with our propellers, some minutes elapsed before he was again able to overtake the ship. As he ran under our lee all the wind went out of his sails, and it was clear that he would only have time to scramble up the ladder that a running Lascar hastily threw over, making it fast to the rail of the poop. Waiting his time, he cleverly jumped as his boat rose on the crest of a wave, and was on deck shaking hands in a moment. His imperturbable, solitary crew sheered off, and, after lashing the helm, proceeded in a leisurely fashion to lift in the heavy fenders.

These pilots are a fine body of men, numbering some five hundred, who mostly farm, work in the forests, or fish during the winter. When the summer comes on they leave their farms in the charge of Mrs. Pilot and the little Pilots for months together. It is the King who decrees where the pilot stations are to stand. The administration lies in the hands of three superintendent pilots, each in his own district assisted by master-pilots, who in their turn supervise the ordinary pilots.

I asked one man what the fee depended on, and his answer was, that the tariff was fixed by law; the fees depending chiefly on the draught and capacity of the vessel, and the season. If he was privileged he kept the fees, with the exception of 14 per cent. that went to the relief

fund for the old and invalided, the widows and children. "Ah!" he said, "we do not mind giving the money to keep our poor. You might not think it," he went on, "but as many as 17,400 vessels are sometimes piloted in one year, which brings in a lot of money. Anything of 30 tons burden, coming from or leaving for ports outside Norway, must have one of us on board; even fishing vessels, if they are over 130 tons burden. Yes," he said reflectively, "I suppose the money we earn as a body must be some 615,000 krone."

My friend was a tall good-looking fellow with clear blue eyes and fair hair. He had been in America and spoke English well, and whiled away a most instructive hour as the ship wound in and out of the narrow walled-in fjord that leads to Gudvangen. I repeat his conversation here, as the pilot is the first and most important person that welcomes the visitors to Norway.

Higher and higher rose the wind, striking the water in sharp squalls which sent the spray flying from the crests of the waves, till out of the hurly-burly loomed a tall tapering lighthouse—a dim ghost, grey at first, which, as we approached, showed up red and white, standing high on bare rocks with clustering wooden houses at its base. This was the Faerder Fyr, that throws its welcome beam during the dark days across the entrance of the Christiania Fjord. Once under its lee the swell subsides, and gradually dies away as the ship steams steadily northward, passing hundreds of rocky islands.

The squalls dash down the inlets as we go by, ruffling the inky water, which breaks into a mass of fierce little white horses. Through the mist one can just make out the higher land of Telemarken, a country of rocky slopes, and the beginning of the great forests of conifers which clothe the banks that rise to a moderate height on either

side of the fjord. After the rough weather it was most pleasant to glide over the still water, entering into this land of pine-clad ridges, intersected in all directions by valleys, lakes, and torrents.

The whole region is historic, easily populated in imagination with our old Norse ancestors, plundering seafaring pirates that they were, who, coming as they did with fire and sword, sowed the leaven of their freebooting love of adventure and danger in the blood of the Anglo-Saxon race.

"Bautastenar"—the stones carved with runes telling the names and parentage of the old Vikings—stand here and there. At Gogstad, near Sandefjord, an old chief was found buried in his war galley, with all his arms, possessions, and treasures. As late as 1880 a large barrow, called Kongshangen (the king's mound), was opened by Mr. Nicolaysen, discovering a ship of the ninth century, built of oak 70 feet long, with the mast, oars, rudder, and even some of the shields still hanging on the upper strake.

On the opposite shore the old town of Halden, that in days gone by so bravely withstood the Swedes, and earned for itself the name of Fredrikshald, comes into distant view, and is soon passed. It was regarded as a strong fortress, and the key to Norway. To-day Fredrikshald is the centre of the timber traffic, where some millions of logs are collected for export every year.

Every port in England knows the hog-backed strained old Norwegian timber vessel, with deck-load piled level with the rail, masts sloping all ways at once. The green windmill everlastingly at work trying to pump out the water that is always running in through the yawning seams. The *Alf* or the *Olaf*, we know it well. Its patched old sails, which always seem to have been cut out for some other vessel. The line of its sheer dragged

out of shape by the pull of the chain plates. The great wooden stocked anchors, and the rusty cables made of odd lengths of chain shackled together. The white hoops round the mast, even the smell of the burning fir from the galley fire. Is it not all as the face of an old friend? Dear old timber vessels, I have met them everywhere, tumbling over the fierce channel rollers as they stagger under lower topsails trying to work off a lee shore with solid green water swirling along the deck-load, and storm staysails glistening in the spray. Or perhaps in an oily calm, where the great empty hull towers out of the dimpled waters high as a church, every stitch of canvas slatting and shivering as the creaking yards saw from right to left. I have met them being towed towards port waterlogged with a bad list, and alas! I have also seen them floating bottom up, the curling surges setting their white teeth at the drifting timber as though they would devour everything.

Our ship steams steadily on, and it would seem as though there is no end to the labyrinth of ice-worn rocky islets. One channel among them leads up in the direction of Tonsberg, the oldest seaport in the country. Only a narrow neck of land separates us from the long fjord on which this busy whaling port stands. It would be interesting to walk over the ridge and drop down on the Notere and Tjeme where the sailors live, and hear the tales of the ice pack and the polar ocean, all crimson with the blood of the struggling rorqual, of flensing and trying out, of fogs and ice-blink, of leads and blocks and nips. After the dangers follow the happy return of the deep-laden whaler, her spars and rigging black with soot, and her hull greasy from stem to stern with the fat of the slaughtered cretacean. Tonsberg goes back to the time of the Vikings, and is famous for its hardy seafarers.

TIMBER BARQUE OFF STAVANGER

Now we are coming up to the Isle of Bastö, with its fixed light. Beyond opens the broad bight which forks into Sandesogns Fjord, and Drammen Fjord. Pale blue hills fade one behind the other into the distant clouds, and the nearer shores slope upward, covered with thick forests of firs which seem to stretch for miles. At first sight the light yellow water-mark, which outlines every little cape and inlet, seems to suggest a sandy soil, but as we steam nearer we can make out through our glasses that the gently rounded surface is all of solid rock, no doubt worn quite smooth by the ice ages ago; even the fir trees are all growing on smooth stone, though the colour where the water no longer washes is darker and more grey. Little wooden houses nestle, here and there, among the trees, with sometimes a patch of bright green meadow.

Drammen is a great place for timber and pitch. Even down at the mouth of the fjord the brigs and barques are lying, taking in their newly sawn freights. There are places where the steamers moor right alongside the rocks. At first it was impossible to make out of what the cargo consisted that came sliding down a switchback from above, appearing and reappearing till stopped by two men, and guided into the hold. On nearing the spot the sun's rays caught a block on its swift course downwards, turning the lump of ice into a great sparkling jewel. As we passed close in to the shore, men, women, and children came out and waved table-cloths, flags, and kerchiefs, greeting the great ship that seemed to take up all the width of the fjord.

Pine trees are over everything, far and near, and along the banks are the country houses of the residents of Christiania, with flat roofs, flagstaffs, and the gay free flag of Norway fluttering in the summer breeze. Green sloping lawns, jetties with skiffs moored alongside, and

bathing boxes, form ideal surroundings during the long light days.

As we near Christiania we come to large stacks of timber, piled high on the edge of the fjord, in all stages from whole trees to firewood. Close by on the left is a great target for artillery practice. The fort itself, "Oscarsborg," holds a strong position, terraced with green sward from which grin the muzzles of quick-firing guns, trained down the narrow reach.

Almost in line with the fort is Drobak, which calls itself a watering-place, a mass of what looks like dolls' houses, with white poles everywhere. The houses of the châlet type are painted red, pale blue, green, and yellow, a little rustic church with red roof and white cross stands in their midst, a brilliant spot of colour on the hillside. Then come the cement works of Stemmestad, and farther on the island of Steilene, on which are large tanks of petroleum, with steamers lying alongside the rock. The formation of this island is evidently due to some great upheaval that must have taken place, as the strata, once horizontal, now stands on its end in perpendicular lines of deposit.

From the moment we had passed the fort the fjord had been expanding, the porphyry ranges of Kolsaas, Skongumsaas, and the Vardekolle lay faint and blue in the distance, and as we passed the promontory of Naesodtangen Christiania came into view, with a foreground of many islands dominated by the old fortress of Akershus.

Christiania lacks the grand setting of Bergen and the beautiful colour of the old houses, but as a capital has an undoubtedly healthy look, and a sweet clean smell comes off from the pine-clad hills. I should say the note of Christiania, as is that of Utrecht, is one of superior

satisfaction. It has discreet verdant parks, large comfortable houses built of very superior yellow bricks, and public buildings built of granite, syenite, and Labrador stone. The palace stands in an unimpeachable position on a height at the west end of the town, with a grand view over the fiord, but has no pretensions whatever to architectural beauty. It is a great block with a classical portico, and that is all.

Being lovers of all craft that sail upon the sea, our footsteps naturally took the direction of the sheds where repose the remains of the Vikings' ships, but lingered in the Carl-Johans Gaden, where the band was playing Rossini's fine overture, "Semiramide." The lads and the lasses just out from school and college, carrying their books, walked leisurely up and down under the cool shades of the trees, talking in little groups and listening to the music. I cannot say I thought the girls pretty or well dressed, but that might be due to the school-girl stage, which has lost the charm of babyhood and not yet attained to the grace of womanhood; the youths, on the contrary, looked a well-set-up race, fair hair predominating.

Continuing our way to the court at the back of the central building of the University, we came to the two wooden sheds containing the ships. Looking forward with pleasure to seeing the second one, which was being put in position the year before, we felt greatly chagrined at being told that strangers were not yet allowed in,—"Next year it might be ready." But things move slowly in Norway, and it may be still "next year" when we call again. To console ourselves we revisited our old friend of Gogstad.

It is eleven hundred years since this old vessel was built, and one cannot help thinking how little the art of shipbuilding has advanced since that distant day. Clean

and sharp both fore and aft, yet with a long flat floor, this stout craft, one would say at once, would be able to carry her canvas well, and would also sail close to the wind. Whilst going free or running she must have been very fast. Clinch-built of oak, with seventeen cut frames (all grown knees), she was doubtless very strong; though, strangely enough, the frames were not bolted to the keel, but only bound down to the planking with soft roots.

A great feature is the mast-step, which is cut in a large block tapering towards bow and stern, and standing on a stout keelson. There was a long slot cut fore and aft in a block of oak, shaped like a fish tail, and fastened to the beams, so that the mast might be easily lowered. Even to this day the timber round the mast is still called mastefisk in Norse vessels. Another term which is still in use, and which dates back to the Viking age, is starboard (the right-hand side of the ship). For the rudder a great fan-shaped plank was pivoted on a bolt projecting from the starboard quarter of the ship, and as the helmsman had his post by the tiller which ran athwart ship, this side was given the name of steerboard.

The third strakes from the top are pierced for sixteen oars aside, and are rather thicker than the others. The openings are round like the looms of the oars, but small slits have been cut out sloping aft and upward, so that the blade might be pushed through the port from inside. The oars seemed very short for so large a vessel, and were of spruce, their shape just like those of a man-o'-war cutter of the present day.

A row of shields hung outside the top strake overlapping each other, and painted alternately yellow and black. These covered the ports when in position, so I suppose they were raised higher so as to protect the heads

VIKING SHIP FOUND AT GAGSTAD NEAR SOURDE FJORD

BEDS FOUND IN THE VIKING'S SHIP

of the rowers when the ship was under oars. A pair of sheers like the boom-crutch of a modern yacht, but carved into horses' heads at the upper end, carried the ridge-pole of the awning, or tjeld, which ran nearly the whole length of the ship. Some pieces of homespun were found, which were no doubt remains of the awning.

The rudder, by the way, hung down considerably below the keel, but it could be triced up by a small line when the water was shallow; the draught of the ship was about four feet, and the freeboard three feet amidships. But both bow and stern rose much higher, finishing no doubt with carved dragons. This part of the ship stuck up out of the mound of potter's clay in which she was buried, and has therefore perished.

There are no signs of any chafe or wear on any of the gear. The oar ports are as sharp and clean-cut as if made yesterday. The lower edge of the keel and stem is quite square and unworn. I fancy, therefore, that the vessel may have been built only just before the old Viking died. She is caulked with a three-thread yarn, spun from cow's hair, so she must have been meant to float, and clearly was not put together on the spot where she was found only to serve as a splendid coffin.

In great contrast to the rest is the sepulchral chamber, which was evidently roughly built of huge balks of timber, and covered over with layers of birch-bark. Inside was the chief himself, with no doubt all his weapons and treasure, but years ago the barrow was dug into and a shaft driven right through the old ship's side. The robbers left everything in confusion, and only a few scanty remains of peacock's feathers, and gold tissue on dark woollen stuff, ornaments of gilt, bronze, and lead, were found, together with the bones of a tall and powerful old man.

The sagas tell of several such burials, and we may, in fancy, bring back the scene when the new ship was hauled up the shore by her crew of grim, fair-haired fighting men. They sang as they pulled, and told of the battles they had won, and the distant lands which had been harried and ravaged, with fire and sword, under the leader who now lay so calm and still on the bier, dressed in his richest clothes. Hel shoes shod his feet, weapons lay by his side, and all his gear was gathered round him, —everything belonging to the ship, the floor boards, the copper kettle, plates, spades, and bailers, together with three smaller boats complete, with rudders, oars, and spars. It was fitting that the great man should go to Odin in proper state. Therefore all his horses and hounds were killed and buried in the clay outside the ship. Then the whole was covered up, and a great mound raised over the spot.

In the song of Sigurd, the hero thus speaks his last words, "Only one boon. Let a wide mound be raised on the plain, roomy for all who die with Sigurd. Surround the mound with tents and shields, with foreign linen finely painted, and with thralls. Burn the Hunnish one at my one side. Burn at the other side of the Hunnish one my servants, with good necklaces, two at his head, and two hawks, then all is equally shared. Let there yet lie between us a ring-wound weapon, a sharp-edged iron, as before was laid when we both stepped into one bed and were called husband and wife. The shining hall door ring ornamented will not then strike him on the heel. If my retinue follow hence, then our journey will not be poor. For there follow five bond-maids, eight servants of good kin, my nurse, and the inheritance which Bondi gave to his child. Much have I told, more would I tell, if fate gave more time for

speaking. My voice decreases, my wounds swell, I told only truth, now I will cease."

In those days there was no mawkish sentiment as to the value of human life. The custom was to redden the mound with blood, and this was done in royal fashion.

Here is another description of the end of an old Norse chief. "Haki received such severe wounds that he saw that his days would not be long. He then had a *skeid* which he owned loaded with dead men and weapons; he had it launched on the sea, and the rudder adjusted and the sea sail hoisted. He had tarred wood kindled, and a pyre made on the ship; the wind blew towards the sea. Haki was almost dead when he was laid on the pyre, then the burning ship sailed out to sea. This was very famous for a long time after." (*Vnglinga Saga.*)

The eddas and sagas abound with descriptions of funeral rites and burials, the accuracy of which is most fully vindicated by the finds. For example: "The first age is called the age of burning, then it was that all dead men were burned and bautastones raised over them. Then the mound age began, when all powerful men were laid in mounds and all common people buried in the ground." (*St. Olaf's Saga.*)

But the mounds were dread places to the living, especially at night where flames were seen to issue and the ghost walked. When the burning did not take place, the warrior was buried with his weapons and entire equipment. Sometimes he slept with his sword under his head. Angantyr's shoulders rested upon the famous sword Tryfing, and Arngrim's sons were buried there in that manner. Angantyr, however, had not counted on his Amazon daughter Hervör wanting the sword. A short time after his death she left by herself in a man's dress with weapons, and joined the Vikings, and was with

them for a while, and called Hervard. A little after the chief of the Vikings died, and Hervard got the command of them, and they came to Sámsey. Hervard went on land, but none of her men would follow, for they said it would not do for any man to stay out there at night. Walking on, Hervard met a herd-boy, and asked him about news. He said: "Dost thou not know the island? Come home with me, for it will not do for any man to stay out here after sunset; I am going home at once." Hervard replied: "Tell me, where are the mounds of Hjörvard?" The boy said: "Thou art unwise, as thou wantest to search for that at night which few dare search for at midday. Burning fires play on the mounds after sunset." Hervard, as is the way of women, persisted, and as the sun set hollow noises were heard in the island, and the mound fires appeared. The shepherd took to his heels, and ran into the forest as fast as he could, and never looked back.

As she came to the mound she sang—

"Awake, Angantyr!
Hervör thee rouses,
The only daughter
Of thee and Svafa;
Yield to me from the mound
The sharp sword
Which the Dvergar
For Svafrlami forged."

She wakes them all—Hjörvard and Hervard, Hrani and Angantyr, and reviles them, calling those who lie beneath the tree roots clad in helmet and mail with sharp sword and reddened spear—

"Sons of Arngrim,
Much harm doing;
Much have you
The mound increased. . . ."

Angantyr rises and tries to put her off, and even stoops to a lie in hopes of keeping his beloved sword, saying that neither father buried him, nor other kinsmen; but the two who lived kept Tryfing. He tries to frighten her by threats of the mound opening and belching flame. He sings—

"Ajar is the gate of Hel,
The mounds are opening;
All the island coast
Looks as if on fire."

But Hervör is dauntless, telling her dead father that he cannot light any flame that will make her quail. Angantyr then threatens the mail-clad maiden, telling of all the awful things that are in store for her in the future. That she shall bear a son who will be the mightiest under the tent of the sun. He will wield the magic sword, and this Tryfing will—

"If thou canst believe it,
All thy kin, maiden, destroy."

Then Hervör threatens the dead champions that she will weave a spell that shall bind their ghosts rotting in the mound, unless the sword, the slayer of Hjalmar, the hater of mail-coats, is yielded to her out of the mound.

The dead chief, after trying more persuasion, at last tells her that the slayer of Hjalmar lies under his shoulders, all wrapped in fire, and that there is no maiden who dares take this sword in her hand; but his daughter at once offers to hold the sharp *maekir*, saying that she does not fear the burning fire, for the flames grow less when she looks at them. And Angantyr, finding that there is no way to stay the impetuous lady, who rushes at the fire

with open eyes, at last flings out the sword into the hands of Hervör. Then she sings—

"Thou didst well,
Kinsman of Vikings,
When thou gavest me
The sword from the mound;
I think, King!
I have a better gift
Than if I got
The whole of Norway."

The dead chief calls his last warning, that the Tryfing will destroy all her kin, and tells his exulting child to keep hidden the slayer of Hjalmar—

"Touch thou not its edges,
Poison is in both,—
This doomer of men is worse than disease."

The mound closes. Then Hervör left the dreadful plain of Munarvag, and walked down to the seashore, but when the day dawned she saw that her ships had sailed away,—the Vikings had been afraid of the thunderings and flames. (*Hervarar Saga.*)

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIANIA—ANCIENT AND MODERN ART

FROM the Viking's ship we passed on into the University Garden to the Museum of Art, built in the Italian Renaissance style, and presented to the town by the Christiania Savings Bank. The hours for opening public buildings in Norway do not coincide with our English ideas of lunch at one. Twice we had thumped on the closed doors in vain, once at ten and the second time a little after three. Cook's magic key had opened the door for the bulk of the passengers, but for a serious consideration of the various works of art the rushing-through process is quite inadequate; so we waited about the gardens till the clock struck twelve, and decorously entered the open portals of this infant school in the world of art.

Norway's school of painting is the youngest in Europe. It belongs to the nineteenth century, and blossomed at a time when a new view of nature was setting in. Ruysdael and Everdingen, the two old Dutch landscape painters whose works are found in the Danish galleries, opened the eyes of Johan Christian Dahl to the characteristic and—in an artistic sense—unutilised natural beauty of his native land. Painting did not burst into Norway as it did into Holland between 1590 and 1635. It has never had its Rembrandt and Jan Steen, Vermeer or De Hooch, Gerard Dou, Ostade, Potter or Cuyp. At

that time good art came, but it is a puzzle to know why, and also why by 1700 it was practically all over. The year 1666 saw the birth of Magnus Elisen Berg in Norway, who stood far and above his contemporaries, but more as a sculptor than a painter, and more as a carver in ivory than either. In the antechamber of the princess in the royal castle of Rosenberg is a recess full of his wonderful work; one, an ivory vase, represents the element water in Rococo style, swans on a floral cup of water form the knob to the cover. Female figures, with uplifted arms, make the handles, figures support the body of the cup, and shells form the base. I wish at the time I had looked more closely at the portrait of this peasant-born genius, which hangs up high on the right in the same room. We have examples of his work in the royal collections in England, and some are in Vienna. But none could I find in this gallery, which, of course, may be an oversight on my part.

It was only after the dissolution of the union with Denmark that the nation awoke to consciousness, and asserted its independence in the domain of art. In less than twenty years a little flock of painters had arisen, half gods in comparison with the earlier Dutch masters; but half gods were better than no gods at all. Popular opinion voted them a true Norwegian school. I differ. There was no school for artists in Norway. Nearly if not all were obliged to go for their training to the art academy in Copenhagen, and from there drifted to Düsseldorf, Munich, and Paris. Dahl is the bell-wether of the flock. Born in Bergen in 1788, he died a professor in the Dresden Academy in 1857. He has often been called the creator of the romantic landscape. But in spite of his close relations with the group of Dresden romanticists, more especially with the pronounced romantic landscape

painter' Friedrichs, the dreamy view of life and visionary conception of art of the German romanticism was foreign to his lively and positive temperament. In reality he was a wide-awake realist, and there is more true genius in the stroke of his brush than in that of any other Norwegian artist of his period. Although he lived at a distance from his native land, he never ceased to glorify its picturesque beauty, and returned, again and again, to Norway to make studies and gather impressions.

To this period belong Fearnly, a painter of decoratively idealistic landscapes; Knud Baade; J. C. G. Frich, some of whose best works, of beautiful parts of Norway, decorate the palace of Oscarshal; and Johan Görbitz, who displayed considerable talent as a portrait painter.

The next generation, who appeared in the forties, continued their labours on German soil, where the historical genre picture and representations of national life became the field *par excellence* of the Düsseldorf painters' endeavours. The school had not been in existence many years before a heavy atmosphere weighed upon its productions. It shrunk into a narrow-minded reaction against the high-flying, idealistic endeavours in the art of the earlier generations. At the same time, it degenerated into a colouring that was chiefly a réchauffé of old-gallery art, quite as insipid in its lukewarm sweetness as in its motley magnificence.

Constable's talented productions in modern landscape were unknown to the artistic development of Norway. No reflection of the brilliant colouring and imaginative glow that romance, at this time, was throwing over French art was visible. The French revolution of 1848 helped matters in so much that it drove the flock of Norwegian

artists home. The most prominent personality among the painters, who were under the influence of the Düsseldorf school, is Adolf Tidemand (1814–1876), not so much on accouut of his artistic talent as because he was the first Norwegian figure painter worthy of mention. Those who feel interested in his works can study his series of pictures of Norwegian peasant life that hang round the dining-hall in the palace of Oscarshal. From this gallery I have chosen to reproduce his picture of the old man reading the Bible, "A Solitary Couple." It has an old-fashioned look about it, if it is permissible to call any work of art old-fashioned. As I studied it I felt as though I had opened a trunk of my grandmother's clothes, and was looking at a dress of a bygone period,—shall we say, early Victorian? The material is light, soft to the touch, and a little faded. The lace is most carefully stitched on, the whole emitting the faint smell of a bygone day. In this picture the aged bondi, in knee-breeches and large-buttoned waistcoat, sits reading a heavy-clasped Bible to his sweet-faced old wife. The light from the window on the old man's white hair forms a fine contrast to the dark-painted panelling. The interior is worked up most minutely. The carved corner cupboard and dresser, the looking-glass and table, are all painted so that it would be quite possible to make real ones from them. The old lady sits listening, her hands devoutly crossed, dressed in the national costume. The gold-embroidered cap and embroidered vest, the little saucer-shaped gold ornament, all are recorded most faithfully. "Nice in feeling, isn't it?" my companion remarks as we pass on. It is just this nice feeling that made Tidemand's art exercise considerable influence upon Norwegian development in culture; not alone in art, but in poetry and music as well, thus turn-

ing the gaze of strangers upon the people to whom he belonged.

Hans Gude, who frequently collaborated with Tidemand, for a time kept up the traditions of the Düsseldorf school. Under changing circumstances of life and various influences he worked his way out of its weaknesses, and found fresher and more personal forms of expression. In Düsseldorf, Carlsruhe, and Berlin he was surrounded by a crowd of pupils, Scandinavian and German, who learnt to appreciate his ability, noble disposition, and sincere amiability.

Herman August Cappelen is the first to cast off the German yoke. The Sam Bough of his day, he painted the "Dying-out of a Forest," great bare rocks with blasted and riven fir trees, gnarled stumps, against a dull grey sky, a romantic if fictional piece of scenery. He left behind him a large collection of capital open-air studies, freely and broadly painted in a dark and unassuming colouring, that had nothing in common with the old school.

In the sixties, Düsseldorf ceased to be the art centre of Norwegian painters. It had played itself out. Carl Sundt Hansen, for a short period of his career, worked on German soil, after which he went to Paris. He is the only worthy follower of Tidemand as a painter of peasant life; but the life he portrays is melancholy to a degree. Betrayed maidens, or young couples standing by the coffin of their child, are not inspiriting to hang on a wall. Life is sad enough in itself without our being reminded of some of its bitterest pangs.

Passing these quickly by, we stopped before "The Condemned Man's Confession." Not that this was any brighter, but it seemed to illustrate a gruesome little story we had read by Björnson. In the picture a

minister is reading to a manacled prisoner, who sits listening with his hand over his face. Behind stands an armed warder, who looks as though he only acted in this capacity on rare occasions. The whole is worked up with the same minute detail as the story of the village murder that must have taken place in Björnson's school days; no one but a boy could have seen what he did. He tells how the inquiry was held in the schoolroom of the parsonage, for there was no court-house, and indeed the school had to serve as prison too. "They came in two boat loads from Molde: the dean, the bailiff, the military escort, and the condemned man. . . . And then the silence afterwards. People whispered as they moved about the rooms and out in the yard, whence they looked down upon the school-house prison where the steady light burned. Schoolmaster Jacobsen was sitting there now with his friend; they were singing and praying together. . . . Peer's family came in the evening in a boat, went up to see him, and took leave of him. . . . The execution had to take place at a cross-road, and there was only one in the neighbourhood, namely, of Edsvaag, nearly seven miles away from where the murder was committed. The bailiff headed the procession, then came the soldiers, then the condemned man, with the dean on one side and my father on the other, then Jacobsen and my tutor, with me between them, then some more people, followed by more soldiers. . . . The sheriff stationed himself directly in front of the place where some planed boards were laid over the grave. At one end of it stood the block. . . . Peer Hagbö knelt below on the step with his face buried in his hands, close to the feet of his spiritual adviser. . . . The dean was of Danish birth. . . . His addresses were beautiful to read, but one couldn't always hear him, and

least of all when he was moved. . . . The points of his tall shirt-collar, which reached to the middle of his ears . . . stuck up on each side of the bare-cropped head with the two double chins beneath, and the whole was framed between his shoulders, which by long practice he could raise much higher than other men. . . . One thing alone we all understood: that he loved the pale young man whom he had prepared for death. The young man then shook hands all round, and placed himself by his friend Jacobsen. The latter knew what this meant. He took off a kerchief and bound Peer's eyes, while we saw him whisper something to him, and receive a whispered answer. Then a man came forward to bind Peer's hands behind his back; but he begged to be left free, and his prayer was granted. Then Jacobsen took him by the hand, and led him forward. At the place where Peer was to kneel Jacobsen stopped short, and Peer slowly bent his knees. Jacobsen bent Peer's head down until it rested on the block; then he drew back and folded his hands. All this I saw, and also that a tall man came and took hold of Peer's neck, while a smaller man drew forth from a couple of folded towels a shining axe with a remarkably broad thin blade. It was then I turned away. I heard the captain's horrible 'Present Arms'; I heard some one praying 'Our Father.'"

Here we leave the story. The little lad never forgot the terrible ending. All along he had pondered over the words of the unfortunate girl who had been done to death. She with her dying breath had said, "They mustn't do him any harm." Conceive the boy's horror when he heard the dean say to his father and mother that, before receiving the Holy Communion in prison, Peer had said to him that it was not he who had dragged the girl to the cliff and thrown her over. If the dean wished to know

who had done it he could tell him. But the dean said "No; it was only with Peer Hagbö that he had to do." Björnson ends thus: "This happened more than fifty years ago. Since then (he adds satirically) Norway has utterly changed in every respect. But this is not a picture, it is only a little short story; but so graphically told that it can only have been copied straight from nature.

Of the painters that studied in Munich, the older generation was far less important and interesting than the succeeding one, which afterwards came under the influence of the French open-air painting, though we have a good representative in Frederik Collet. Born in 1839, he began as a pupil of Gude's, but afterwards studied in Munich, and later on was greatly influenced by the French open-air tendency. At first he sought his subjects in the south country fjord scenery, but afterwards made the east country winter, with its masses of snow and half-frozen rivers, his special study. His picture in this gallery is perhaps a trifle uninteresting, but the whole is unconventional and real—the turbid stream forcing its way through the snow-covered flat, on which are nicely drawn trees, with bare branches waving against the wintry sky.

The younger generation are, I am convinced, well represented by the painters Axel Ender and Otto Sinding. Axel Ender's picture "The Resurrection Morn" gives distinction to the little church at Molde. It illuminates the interior in a wonderful degree by its faint chaste colouring. The surprise on the listening women's faces is well rendered, and the angel's figure is easily poised on the tomb.

Otto Sinding is altogether stronger. It would be interesting to know what influence was exerted to make these great men what they are. The versatile Otto was

SISTERS

BY HANS HEVERDAHL

born in 1842, and is a brother of the sculptor Stephen Sinding, and of Christian Sinding the composer, each a master of his art. Otto Sinding made his début in literature before he began his artistic studies, and tried to find satisfaction in a variety of tasks. He divided his great working powers between painting and literary or scenic interests. He has painted marine pictures and genre, historical scenes, representations of fishing life on the Norwegian coast, landscapes, peasant life, and fishing in the Lofoten Islands. These latter works, to my mind, are as good if not better than any I have seen from his brush. On page 228 is a very impressive rendering of a fishing village among the Lofotens. The snow is deep over the cabins and fields that lie at the foot of great walls of rock, whose peaks jut into the mists. At the head of the fjord are the square-sailed cod boats. Hard frost is wonderfully suggested; the smoke rises straight into the still air. It is quite a typical scene in Norway, treated in a masterly fashion.

On page 17, "The Two Sisters," by Hans Heyerdahl, is a revelation. He, Werenskiold, Christian Krohg, Fritz Thaulow, Gustav Wentzel, and Gerhard Munthe are the true Norwegian school. All studied in Munich, and afterwards in Paris. Their eyes were trained through French art to open-air painting, but on their return to Norway they freed themselves from foreign influences, and worked with full consciousness for the nationalising of Norwegian art. How well they have succeeded can be traced on the walls of this gallery. Hans Heyerdahl is a colourist. His beautiful picture of "The Two Sisters" was painted after his return to Norway, and is to my mind the most pleasing picture on the walls. It is the ripe fruit of the twofold influence of open-air painting and realism. The girls are real girls, with no attempt to

beautify or smooth. Thinking of nothing, they are charming as representatives of sweet early girlhood. I have heard it said that Heyerdahl was not a profoundly thoughtful painter. However this may be, his talent has a sense and enjoyment of beauty, a love of delicate form, and a marvellous appreciation of colour.

The actual leaders in the hard fight that led in the eighties to the victory of naturalism are Erik Werenskiold and Christian Krohg. Werenskiold, as I have said before, studied in Munich from 1875 to 1880, but early emancipated himself from the artistic views of his teachers. He avoided picture galleries, and acknowledged no other source of instruction than the immediate study of nature. In the numerous pictures exhibited by the French painters in Munich in 1879 he realised the road he would wish to follow in the future; and going to Paris for three years, he became a thorough convert. In 1883 he settled in Norway, where he became the artist who most clearly formulated the programme of the tendency. His subjects are chiefly limited to the ordinary everyday life in Norway, and to portraits. Everything he does bears the stamp of solidity, but in the solidity charm is not lacking. When I came upon Ibsen's portrait it was like an oasis in a mediocre desert of canvas. I called to my companion to come. Here is something really worth looking at. His answer was: "Well, you come here first. I fancy this must be by the same man." "A country funeral." So it was. A great deal of pathos is shown in its unforced realism; the landscape is as important a part of the picture as the figures themselves, and the colour and lighting are as natural as can be. The shadow side of the faces catches the reflection of the pale-blue sky; the cast shadows on the ground, the grave covered

with the evenly cut sods; all are in keeping. The expression on the men's faces is a perfect study. The types are absolutely common-place, just the people you first meet, without any selection. Werenskiold has aimed at simple truth, and it could not be better done. His "Telemarken Peasant Girls," No. 302 in this gallery, are also excellent.

In Fritz Thaulow we have an artist who seems to belong to ourselves as well as to Norway. A well-known figure in London society, he was greatly looked up to and beloved by all who came into contact with him. His artist friends in England hold his memory in high esteem, and it is not too much to say that his death was deeply regretted by the whole fraternity. Thaulow was the central figure in the young generation of artists. He studied in Copenhagen, and then in Carlsruhe under Gude; but his three years in Paris did more for him than all his previous training. Enthusiastic, handsome, full of good-humour, highly sensitive to impressions of the beautiful, he stands yet another leader in the cause of naturalism. In his earlier work he represented the clear Norwegian winter's day with great freshness, but he was extraordinarily facile. I do not think that of his multitudinous productions this gallery has by any means the best.

I must not miss out Eyolf Soot. The Norwegians claim that he is the greatest colourist of the company. Never mind at what end of the gallery you may be, his dramatic "Infanticide" calls you. It might be considered an importunate picture. One associates a cow-shed with the birth of our Lord, not with the death of a new-born infant. My sympathy goes out to the poor young mother, kneeling on the dirty ground, gazing into the future with terrified eyes. The light falls in

gently, and the cow in the next stall is evidently feeding unconcernedly. Soot is the *pointiste* of the brotherhood. His methods are seen in the portraits of Jonas Lie and his wife. The iridescent touches lie side by side; looked at from a distance, they melt into one tone.

Gustav Wentegel is the last that I have space to talk of in this chapter. Born in 1859, Norway considers him one of the most eminent of this generation. In his masterpiece of colouring, "Frokost" (Breakfast), he depicts the less well-to-do classes in the capital devouring a meal and printed matter at the same time. The grouping is unconventional, most of the heads are seen against a window, through which one catches a glimpse of a street, and one of the ugly modern Norwegian churches. The light breeze can almost be felt as it blows through the muslin curtains. A little bare-armed girl has come for a helping to a nondescript-looking person whose back is towards us. All the rest of the people are hard at work drinking, or poring over their books. The whole is very up-to-date and realistic. None of the men or women are at all good-looking, but they are undoubted flesh and blood.

Sculpture was at a very low ebb at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The world looked up to Thorvaldsen as the marvel of his age, though truly in the present day it is difficult to see anything to admire in the pappy, lifeless masonry of this prolific worker. It seems wonderful to think that when Thorvaldsen was at the height of his fame Lord Elgin was actually bringing to the notice of the world the matchless work of Phidias, and yet no one of that day could see the enormous gulf which separated the two. Thorvaldsen's great hall with its faded frescoes, drawing the attention of the passers-by to the honours lavished on the departed, stands, tarnished

CARVED DOOR FROM OLD CHURCH AT HALLINGDAL

and out of fashion, a blot in the beautiful capital of Copenhagen. Compare this with the Parthenon, grandly crowning the Acropolis; even in its ruin the most perfect monument in the world.

The earlier peasant-born sculptors in Norway were far more talented as ornament carvers than as sculptors. It took them some time to cast off their wood-carving traditions and turn from the ornamental, in which they excelled, to the free representation of the human figure. As their woodwork is in every way superior to their sculpture, it is lucky for the present generation that the early productions of these old masters of carving are to be found in the art museums at Rosenberg, the museums of Scandinavian antiquities in Copenhagen, in the museum at Bergen, and in the Museum of Industrial Art at the corner of the Universitets-Gaden here. The Historical Museum that is to contain a wonderful collection of northern antiquities, including the two Viking ships, will shortly be opened,—public works move slowly in Norway. When finished it will be a harbour of refuge for the lovely carved doors of the old Stave-kirker, mediæval objects, remains of the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Age, and coins.

The Norwegian sculptors of our century begin with Hans Michelsen, who as a soldier attracted the attention of his superiors by his wonderful wood carving. From 1819 to 1826 he received monetary aid which enabled him to study in Rome under Thorvaldsen. One meets his work in Trondhjem Cathedral, in the figures of the twelve apostles that he was commissioned to sculpt by King Carl Johan.

In the second generation we have Bach, whose "Jephthah's Daughter," No. 396, stands in the vestibule in company of Stephen Sinding's "Barbarian Mother,"

but with a wide gulf between. Bach, like Michelsen, Middelthun, the ever-hard-up struggling Hansen, and Olaf Olafsen Glosimodt, were all based on Thorvaldsen. See Middelthun's statue of "Halfdan Kjerulf," also his statue of "Schweigaard" that stands in front of the University. Glosimodt, again, executed a number of busts of famous Norwegians, and a rather nice statue of the "Saeter Girl," but it is by his splendid works in ivory, box-wood, and ornamental wood carving that his reputation lives.

The third generation is still an echo of Thorvaldsen. Bergslien, belonging to a peasant family famous for its artistic abilities, goes to Copenhagen, and executes in marble several of Thorvaldsen's works for the museum. He comes back to Norway and is entrusted with the equestrian statue of "Carl Johan" which stands in front of the palace, and afterwards with the statue of the creator of Norwegain literature, "Henrik Wergeland," which stands in the Eidsvolds-Plads. Fladager, again, who was a highly gifted wood carver, drifts into sculpture when he would have been far better employed at his wood carving. This effort can be studied in No. 117 in his model and sketch of an angel with font, which can be seen in place in the Vor Frelsers Church. Now look, as we did, at Mathias Skeibrok's "Ragnar Lodbrok among the Serpents," and his statue of "Tired," — a servant-maid, fallen asleep from weariness, a figure full of feeling and truth. Pause and study and note the great stride he has made, then go on and look at Sinding's "Captive Mother" and "À ma Femme," and you will realise that Thorvaldsen's art is dead, and that Norway is ready to hold her own in Europe. The rooms adjoining the vestibule contain the casts from the sculptures of ancient Greece. Here we wandered, renewing our old acquaintance with matchless Venus de Milo,

Theseus; the headless Ilissus, and the Centaurs in conflict with the Lapithæ;—all taken from the ruins of the Parthenon. They were but plaster, yet we could not tear ourselves away, and lingered over them lovingly and long.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANIA—HOLMENKOLLEN

WITH a head full of art, I proposed that our next course should consist of nature, pure and unadulterated, and suggested that we could find both nature and food at Holmenkollen, one of the most delightful spots in the environs of Christiania. The city tram takes one to the terminus at Majorstuen, and the electric car goes from the terminus to Holmenkollen. Should one be doubtful about the fare a few small coins presented in the palm to the collector is sufficient. He will take what is his due, and nothing more. The line runs past several nice country houses, and through a new villa colony, neatly built and gaily coloured, through pine forest, where, here and there, one catches a glimpse of the fjord, till Midstuen is reached. From there is a short steep walk to the Tourist Hotel. This is a truly picturesque building, with much carving; pent roofs, from which jut ornamental dragon heads; long balconies where it is possible to have a cosy meal; broad terraces with innumerable little tables and chairs, and a covered-in bandstand.

I left it to our hostess to provide what she thought best for our very late lunch or Norwegian dinner. I had found out by this time why public buildings were only open from twelve to three. Three o'clock is the dinner hour, when all doors are locked and the streets are empty.

CHRISTIANIA FROM HOLMENKOLLEN

Sitting on the terrace, awaiting our repast, we enjoyed to the full the lovely view from this coign of vantage. It had rained once or twice during the morning, and the sun was now chasing the great white clouds whose shadows swept swiftly over the smooth, brilliant, green sward of the downs.

To the left the town, with its big stucco houses and church steeples, spreads along the shore. The glazed tile roofs glisten—and twinkle; beautiful deep blue smooth hills covered with a thick growth of pine encircle the two fjords (Christiania and Bunde) on every side; and these stretch away out of sight. Islands, large and small, raise their rocky heads. On our left are the pine-clad hills of Ekeberg, at the foot of which runs in the Bjorvik, divided by the peninsula on which stands the old fortress of Akershus. Pipervik is the landing-place where our ship's launches run to and fro to the *Vectis*. She looks quite imposing anchored between the shore and the island of Horedö, while beyond again rises Bliko.

To the right is the peninsula of Bygdo, on which is the château of Oscarshal. The white well-kept road, running between the tall pines, spruce, and birch that flank it on either side, goes gently uphill till it reaches the Hall, which is the same that I spoke of as containing examples of Tidemand's art representing Norsk peasant life. The walls are also adorned by Norwegian landscapes by Frich. In the drawing-room on the ground-floor are statues by Michelsen; bas-reliefs by C. Borch, from Frithjof's saga; and landscapes by H. Gude. Nothing in Oscarshal compares to my mind with the weird room in this hotel, decorated by Gerad Munthe. This artist has done much towards the colour and composition for the weaving of the delightful cloths used for hangings, which are now the prevailing styles in this flourishing Norwegian trade.

The Fairy-tale room, as it is called, is unique. It is decorated with grotesque polychrome, fairy scenes carved in wood and fantastically ornamented. This is the room that the Queen uses when she, in company of the King and little Prince Olaf, honours Holmenkollen with her presence. Her visits are much talked of by mine hostess. The door has long hinges that run across, great tongues of floral flames. On either side are weird-faced Jotnar holding keys in their beak-like mouths, carved as heads to the tree columns that form the door-posts. Over the door the legend runs—

"Nórdan ūnder fjällo.
Djūpt ūnder héllo.
Der leikar ded."

Panels, illustrating fairy tales, run round the room over a handsomely carved dado, each panel being framed by an extraordinary pattern of threaded beads. The ceiling is carved in a geometrical wheel pattern, intersected with zebra-marked beams. The chairs are also fantastic, rather Chippendale in pattern, but with a great bird, with erected crest, forming the top of the back. The crest is repeated again on the left-hand front leg. This is an upper room and should not be missed. Downstairs, too, are many interesting objects—tankards, the old-fashioned carved wooden irons, queer candlesticks, and some good pictures.

From this hotel the road still leads upwards, connecting the Frognersaeter with Holmenkollen, the Keiser Wilhelms Veien it is called, which runs almost all the way through the woods to the saeter, which last was purchased by the city of Christiania. The former Villa Heftye contains a collection of Norse antiquities. There are a few old Norwegian timber buildings, from Telemarken and the

A NORWEGIAN WINTER'S DAY

BY FRITS THAULOW

Hallingdal, but this is, as Herodotus remarks, "As I have heard say." We were contented with Holmenkollen and its view, and worked quietly on till the hour approached for the dinner launch at Pipervik, which waits for no man, not even the captain.

In winter, when the fjord is frozen, which, according to the chart, it invariably is, every house in Christiania on fête days is forsaken. All the people are gathered either at the top or the bottom of the Holmenkolbakken, assembled in their thousands on their ski and in sledges to witness the sports. "To us," our hostess remarked, "the winter is more interesting. We then have hundreds of people, and the air is so pure." The same sentiments exactly as are breathed by Björnson in a sketch on his country and people, written for *Harper's Magazine*, in which he avers that a journey through the country in winter is better than the ordinary summer touring. He maintains that the people are then seen to advantage, and that such a journey is better for one's health. He writes: "To make this last clear, I must explain that Norway is not the cold country which its geographical position would lead one to believe. The reasons for this are two: a warm current runs along the Norwegian coast, fills the space inside the great banks and islands, and passes into the fjords; these same banks prevent also the ice water from the polar seas from reaching the coast. Is it possible that this should also have an effect upon the people of the country? Is this the reason that this northern country of ours, when it, about five hundred years since, only had a population of from two to three hundred thousand inhabitants, produced that succession of men and deeds of which Snorre Sturlasson's great work, *The Heimskringla*, has given a description—a pattern for all times?

"Is this the reason that our small nation, when its strength again began to revive after destructive civil wars and other great misfortunes (such as that raging epidemic, the 'Black Death,' and another just as great, the miserable Danish rule through four hundred years), produced that master-spirit of wit, Ludvig Holberg, Molière's rival; produced a 'folk-poesy' which in legends, songs, melodies, and tunes may compare with that of any other country; and which in the course of time has begotten a literature and music which are even creating considerable attention outside our own borders? The composers Edvard Grieg and Johan Svendsen are counted among the first of living musicians; Selmer and Sinding are also rising in renown. Executants such as Ole Bull, Erika, Lie-Nissen, and Edmund Neupert are well known in the musical world. Henrik Ibsen's dramas, the Germans declare, have opened up a new road in dramatic art. Alexander Kielland's witty sketches of modern life are now as widely read in Germany, Austria, and Hungary as in the Scandinavian countries. Norway has also produced the greatest mathematician of our time, Nils Abel, who died in 1829. Only twenty-seven years old, after having enriched mathematical science with epoch-marking discoveries. . . ."

"Norway is a 'winter land,' and in my eyes it is then it is most beautiful; white valleys, dark grey rocks, and mountains covered with forests. How finely the latter stand out against the white background! Or, perhaps, the naked mountains are overrun by frozen streams and torrents, which shine in all colours from greyish white, emerald green, to rusty yellow; one part of the forest stands snow powdered, another partly powdered, and yet another wholly green, and by its side the birch trees delicately rime-frosted to their finest tips, or standing out brownish blue against the verdant pines and firs. The

many buildings on the farmsteads, with their snowclad roofs, lie comfortably nestled together in the dazzling white snowfields. I do not understand why people who travel for the sake of their health do not choose the winter in which to visit Norway. And the air! There is no bacteria in that air."

We landed at Pipervik again next morning to do what we could of the town. It was delightfully fresh, the wide, clean streets newly swept and watered. It seems a veritable white city, where the householder cleans his windows and house fronts, thus embellishing his town more effectually than the erection of grand buildings, though these are not wanting. Karl Joans Gade is flanked with fine houses, extending from the palace at the west end to the station at the east. This is a grand street, some three-quarters of a mile long, with Eidsvold plads in front, with its rustling green trees and cool shade —the Bond Street of Christiania. On the west side stands the National Theatre, with colossal statues of Ibsen and Björnson by Stephen Sinding, and beyond a bronze statue of Johan Brum the actor, by B. Bergslien. Then there is the University founded by Frederick VI. of Denmark in 1811, at the back of which are the Viking ships in their wooden sheds, and beyond again, but farther down the Eidsvold plads, the handsome façade of the Norwegian House of Parliament.

The Norwegian faith is Lutheran, and the churches in their internal arrangements indicate Luther's courage. It has not been thought necessary to mutilate the artistic remains of the old religion. The pictures, statues, and gilding are allowed to remain. The ornamentation is not very remarkable, but there is enough to show that the Northmen have not rushed into the barbaric reaction which led at the Reformation to the wanton destruction

of glorious old cathedrals and religious houses. The botanical gardens, too, which are situated a little way out of the town, are really what they pretend to be. They contain specimens of the common wild plants of the country, growing in the open air, and arranged in their natural order.

We happened on a lucky day for the big market. All Christiania and its country neighbours had assembled in the Stör Torv, that was bright with vegetables, fruit, and flowers. The country carts stood patiently in lines behind the stalls. I had great hopes of seeing some of the wonderful costumes one hears tell off. But no, the all-pervading little shawl, thrown over the head, the dark skirt and big apron, were all we saw—the shawl that might be seen anywhere and any day from Connemara to Constantinople.

There is a railway from Christiania to Eidsvold, the oldest in Norway. It was constructed in 1851. This was to a great extent the property of a few English engineers and contractors. It was a most profitable speculation, as might be expected, as it opened out this great highway of Norway. Transit at a halfpenny a mile, at convenient hours, naturally induced the whole population to become habitual railway travellers. This railway passes through a rich fertile valley, with a pretty river winding along it, and then plunges through some dense forests of tall pines, with stems so straight and uniformly tapered that they appear like huge fishing-rods. Their bark has a fine red colour, which reflects the sunlight and fills the whole atmosphere between the labyrinth of bare poles with a warm tinge.

Eidsvold is beautifully situated on the river which flows from the Miosen Lake and unites with the Glommen. In the farmhouse of Eidsvoldvark the Norwegian constitution

was adapted in 1814. The building has been purchased by Government, and embellished by portraits of members of the first diet. There is a hotel at the station, where it it possible to procure all one wants.

The Miosen is the largest lake in Norway, and has been called Norway's inland sea. It winds away for 62 miles, and is not unlike Windermere. The mountains that form its basin rise to a height of 2300 feet. Their form is not remarkable, but their sides, sloping down to the lake, are covered with rich emerald verdure, rivalling, if not excelling, our own green fields, even those of Ireland. These slopes are backed by fine woods of birch and mountain ash, and dotted about them are wooden farmhouses. Altogether the Miosen is a beautiful lake, but does not excite raptures in this country of grand scenery.

About half-way on the lake is the site of the ancient town of Stör Hammer, now called Hamar, which before the railway was nothing but a large hamlet, as its name signifies. Now it seems a most prosperous and well-to-do town, which dates as a municipality from 1848. It is the seat of the Amtmand, or governor of the district, and of a bishop, and is charmingly situated between two bays, the Furnaesfjord to the north, and the Akersvik to the east. Hamar dates from 1152, when a bishopric was founded here by Adrian IV., whose name was Nicholas Breakspeare. Born before 1100 A.D. at Langley, near St. Albans in Hertfordshire, he is the only Englishman who has occupied the papal chair. He was sent as a legate to Denmark and Norway in 1146. On this mission he converted many of the inhabitants to Christianity, and erected Upsal into an archiepiscopal see. It was soon after his return to Rome that Anastasius, successor of Eugenius, died, and Nicholas was unanimously

chosen Pope against his own inclination in November 1154.

Hamar was destroyed by the Swedes in 1567. The ruins of the cathedral, dating from the twelfth century, remain outside the new town, four round arches of the nave resting on massive piers. To reach this, one of the rare ruins in Norway, you follow the Strand-Gaden to the left of the station, and then Störhammer-Gaden, passing under the railway outside the town. So much for one Englishman who left his mark in the world and in this town. Now to another, who did as much, if not more, for the prosperity of Norway.

Close by the ruins is the large farm of Störhammer, which belonged, and probably still belongs, to the family of Mr. George Bidder, once the famous calculating boy. His extraordinary, natural aptitude for calculation when a lad induced his father, who was a stone-mason at Morten Hampstead, to exhibit him. By the kindness of Sir John Herschel he was sent to school, but his father could not spare the goose that laid the golden eggs, and took him away again. He was saved, however, from this misfortune by Sir Henry Jardine, who took a great interest in him, and arranged that he should attend classes at the Edinburgh University. On leaving he received a post in the Ordnance Survey, but gradually drifted into engineering work with Robert Stephenson, whose acquaintance he had made at Edinburgh. With Robert Stephenson he made this first railway in Norway, from Christiania to Eidsvold, which now continues its way right through the country.

We steamed on till we reached Lillehammer, which you may call a large village or a small town. It has broad and remarkably clean streets, large wooden houses, bright windows with white frames, and lace curtains. There is scarcely a window in the main street that is not filled

with flowers in bright red pots. Everybody appears to be industrious and well-to-do, and nobody rich and useless. At this point we turned, though it would have been most interesting to explore the Gudbrandsdal, which is watered by the Longen, and is the birthplace of a high-spirited race among whom curious old customs still survive. According to Norwegian ideas the valley is well cultivated, but the land has been laboriously reclaimed by the removal of great quantities of stones. The chief occupation of the natives is cattle-raising, and the breeding of the pretty horses that bear its name. In summer many of them migrate with their herds to the saeters, which are built high up the mountains wherever the grass grows plentifully.

We arrived in Christiania in the late afternoon of the following day. Long before we reached Pipervik we heard the deep note of the *Vectis*, and as we arrived at the quay the last boat was about to push off. After the long day it was delightful to be once more on board in the lap of luxury, which consists, in my case, of a bath, a change of clothes, and a long chair on the cool deck. It seems so absurd to talk as if one wanted a cool place in this latitude 61° N., the same as the ice-bound coast of Greenland ; but so it is, Christiania is full of sun, warm—nay, even scorching ! The great screw, after two or three spasmodic throbs, took up the tale, Christiania was left behind, luxuriant, and peacefully beautiful.

We dwellers on a misty island all dream of the bright sky of the sunny south, of its clear blue zenith, and golden-hazed horizon. But when we have lived beneath it for a while, and gazed upon it daily, the fiery, dazzling beauty overstrains the senses, and the eye soon tires of its glare. In this modest twilight of the north, the gentle "gloamin" there is a tempered fascination that never

wearies us; but grows continually in loveliness even unto midnight, and to the joyous awakening of another day.

Whilst writing upon saeters, a night spent in one might be as interesting reading to others as it was to me. The privileged person in this case was Mattieu Williams, who gladly availed himself of the opportunity of spending a night in the saeter attached to the farm of his good hostess of Mork. There were several of these wooden huts dotted about a dreary moorland, round which high peaks of glacier-bearing mountains rose. He found some men asleep in one of the huts; and upon awakening them, they offered to provide him with food and lodging. As there appeared to be many saeters, and these attached to different farms, he inquired whether the one they proposed for his lodging belonged to Mork. Whereupon the men looked curiously at each other, and one of them, with a significant grin, quite unintelligible to him, asked if he particularly wished to lodge in the Mork saeter. . . . "Yes," was the reply, very decidedly; for the fellows were a dirty-looking set, and he was certain that even a saeter, if it belonged to Thora Olsdatter, would be clean.

His answer provoked a general laugh, and they escorted him in a procession to a hut at some distance from the rest, knocked at the door, and called to the inmate, who, for some time, made no answer. At last a blooming lass, a ruddy, muscular, rural beauty—opened the door, and looked forth with a frown of stern maidenly defiance. After a volley of banter, which she received very contemptuously, he was introduced as a traveller who had come all the way from England to visit her saeter, and lodge there for the night. He was received very haughtily at first, until he frowned severely at the scoffer, and told her of his coming from Mork as the guest of Thora Ols, who had sent him thither. She then bade

him welcome, and, immediately he entered, shut the door unceremoniously upon the grinning swains outside, who were seeking an excuse to come in likewise. She supplied him with supper of cheese and fladbröd, and showed him the bed, from which she had just risen, which was to be his; explaining that she had slept during the day, and that her work was about to commence, and would last through the night. She then disappeared.

In the course of an hour he heard a wild "yodl," very loud, but not very melodious. The damsel was returning with a flock of about thirty goats, and some six or eight cows. She took a little bag of salt from the hut, and, before she fairly cleared the threshold, was the centre of a pyramid of goats, who were crowding round her and leaping over each other's backs, for the privilege of licking her hand after each dip into the salt-bag. She repelled the goats as energetically as she had repelled the men; but more mercifully, for she thrust the ends of her fingers into the mouth of each before giving it the buffet of dismissal. . . . The cows were next treated in like manner, then seized by the horns and ears, as the goats were seized before, and each one led to its proper stall in an adjoining building.

The milking was a work of some time, for the girl was quite unaided in this scuffle with her flock, and in all the subsequent operations of milking and cheese-making. She was queen and mistress of her own domain, and her efforts seemed pretty equally divided between the cares of internal administration, and the repelling of the external male invaders; whose gallantry seemed entirely confined to teasing her, and led to no suggestion of aid in her really arduous labours. It may be that the men were idle because it was Sunday, so that they had only come up on a visit to the saeter land. It is, however, notorious, and

acknowledged throughout Norway, that in the saeter woman reigns supreme. Indeed, the social position of the male in a Norwegian saeter is somewhat similar to that which he holds in humble English life on washing-day.

The room itself was about five yards long by four yards wide, built of wood, and lined with shelves, on which were cheeses already made, and the materials for making more. The bed was of the usual rustic Norwegian construction. It consisted of an oblong box made fast to the wall, and partly filled with straw, over which were some coarse sheets, shawls, and a sheep-skin. In the corner opposite to the head of the bed, and almost within arm's reach, was the great hearth, covered with a stone and plaster dome. The other corners were occupied by benches, on which the vessels for standing and mixing the milk, with the other cheese materials, were placed. There was also a second small apartment or cupboard, for the stowage of pans, pails, etc. All was scrupulously clean in this particular saeter. Soon after sunset, the girl came in, bearing heavy pails of rich milk from cows and goats. Some lumps of wood were taken from their store place under the bed, and a crackling fire was soon blazing on the hearth. The iron cauldron, filled with a mysterious mixture of goat's milk and other unknown ingredients, from which the green cheese that ripens in time to "gammel ost" is made, was hooked to the black chain over the middle of the fire. For some hours after the busy lass was there, stirring, mixing, and watching till the dawn, when she disappeared.

Most of the flat land in Norway is in this southern portion of the country. There are considerable stretches in the district around Lake Miosen in Kingerike, in the Christiania valley and on either side of the fjord. Naturally, the most populated parts of the country are

A SOLITARY COUPLE

BY ADOLF TIDEMAND

the valleys where the farms cluster round a lake, or along a river. Often in the forest districts the farms are situated on mountain ridges, separated from each other by long wild woods. Each parish is isolated from its neighbour, and there are but few villages or country inns, so that the people live a very solitary life, only meeting on Sundays at church. The children are rather better off, as they meet each other on their way to and from school. On Saturday and Sunday evenings they again seek each other on the roads, or at one of the farms for a dance. This is, however only in the heyday of youth; this past, they live quietly at home, happy and content. This life can hardly be looked on as solitude, in the full sense of the word, as the farmer, his wife and children, servants and tenants, live and work together from year to year.

The Norwegian farm buildings are, relatively speaking, expensive to build. The winters being so cold, everything on the farm has to be put under a roof. The animals must have good warm stables, the hay, corn, roots, and crops of all kinds have to be stored in houses, the manure even has to be stored in a cellar under the stables, otherwise its strength would be wasted for the land. The older farms consisted of a multitude of small houses, each fitted for its own special use, clustering round a courtyard. Of late it has become the rule to limit the number of houses on a common farm to four. The older farms, to my mind, are the prettier, with their silver-grey wooden walls and birch-bark roofs covered with flowering sods. The modern farmhouse, or *gaad*, as it is called, is more pretentious. The ground-floor is of stone, built for a great cellar under the whole house. This is generally painted white, the rest of the house, one or two storeys high, is built of logs, and generally wainscoted on the

inside, and painted white or red outside. Near the main building, but separated from it, is the laundry, the room for the hired help, and accommodation for the winter store of fuel. The out-building houses the animals, and the hay, grain, and implements.

The *stabbur*, or store-house, is a typical Norwegian piece of architecture, and for some reason or other in some valleys is far more ornamental than the other buildings, especially in Telemarken. As a rule, the *stabbur* is divided into two storeys, and is used for the storage of preserved provisions, flour, cured pork, meat, herring, polonies, and hams ; the year's supply of fladbröd is ranged along the walls in great piles. I might mention here that the making and baking of the bread is an art not understood by all, and that it is the most important and essential article of food of the peasantry. It is made from oat-, barley-, or rye-meal. The dough is rolled out on a large board till it becomes as thin as a wafer and quite big round. The baking is done on an iron griddle, which is placed on the hearth on glowing embers.

Formerly, the sheep-skin quilts and calf-skins, when not in use, were stored in the *stabbur*, with the blankets, cotton quilts, and other household articles of value. Latterly, these have been kept in an upper room in the large houses. These skin covers sound cosy for a cold night. Both are very softly prepared, and the peasantry sleep, the calf-skin underneath and the sheep-skin on top, the woolly side in. A smithy is generally to be found at some little distance from the other houses ; and of old a *badstue* or bathroom, where the people of the house indulged in vapour baths. But this bathing custom went out, Mr. Björnson says, with the introduction of Christianity, when the priests and monks set their faces against it.

While the price of land in other countries has been decreasing, the reverse has been the case in Norway, in all probability from the fact that the holdings are small, and that husbandry is combined with other means of livelihood, such as forestry and fishing. In some districts nearly the whole population move to the saeter, often one or two days' journey distant. But as a rule, it is only the eldest daughter on the farm, with or without a female assistant, and a herd-boy who goes there. Oddly enough, those who have been accustomed to the life in a saeter, become ill from longing when the summer comes should they not be chosen to go up with the cattle; and the same longing, it is said, comes to the cows. If one accustomed to going to the mountains is kept behind at the farmstead, she will wander about, waiting and longing to get away, and on the first opportunity, if not well looked after, the herd will rush to the saeter, led by the bell cow, who knows all about it.

CHAPTER IV

LAURVIK—COLIN ARCHER THE SHIPBUILDER

WHEN the reveille sounded, we were skirting the rockbound coast of Sydl Telemarken. The restless waters of the Skagerack rolled in long ridges, and where the low skerries jutted out the breakers raved and flung white wreaths of foam high into the air. Long winding fjords stretched far into the heart of the ice-worn hills, for the whole of this part of Norway is a perfect maze of lakes and swift-running rivers. The rounded summits stretched away inland for miles and miles, often repeating the same smooth outline, ridge beyond ridge. Fresh vistas opened as we thrashed our way west. For a short time we would see right up the fjord, then the headlands would block up the glimpse we caught of calm inland waters, and all would be barren cliffs and tumbling waves.

Throughout the livelong day the smooth rocks were gliding past. First, in the early morning light, we looked into the inlet which runs up to Laurvik, a mart for wood pulp, timber, and ice. In this out-of-the-way corner is an original and clear thinker, Colin Archer the shipbuilder, he who first taught naval architects the truth with regard to wave lines, after the great Scott Russell had been working for years on a mistaken theory. Here, too, was built the *Fram*, that wonderfully sturdy little vessel which carried Nansen and his dauntless crew all along the north

coast of Siberia until the islands of Llakhof were reached, when the ship's head was turned to the north, and she was thrust right into that dreadful ice-pack which covers all the dreary region of the Pole. On the 25th September 1893 she was quite frozen in, and everything was made ready for the long monotonous drift which was to last until the 17th of July 1896. A windmill was set to work to furnish the power for the electric light, there was food in plenty, even comforts of all sorts, yet those three tedious winters must have been unspeakable in their long-drawn-out monotony.

Nansen, full of energy, and longing to be up and doing, chafed and fretted. His story, written from day to day all through the lagging hours, almost makes one weary too. Whenever there was a south-east wind and the pack was driven in the wished-for direction, his spirits rose; but often the ice moved south, or stood still, and then his rhapsodies about his home, the pine woods, and those who waited for his return, became almost morbid. What a relief it must have been when he at last left the comforts of his ice-bound vessel and, with Johansen the sailor and twenty-eight dogs, struck out over the hummocks and mounds of the pack due north. This desperate expedition started on the 14th March. Every day a dog had to be killed to feed the starving pack, and at last, on the 8th April, it appeared clear that there were only dogs enough to tow the sledges back to Franz Joseph's Land: this was in latitude 86° 13′ 6″. All the way south the poor faithful dogs were killed one by one, and at last, when the open water came in sight, there remained but two dogs. These were shot, and the two determined men pushed off in two canvas canoes. Winter came upon them before they had got far south, so a hut of stones and driftwood was built on desolate "Frederick Jackson

Island." There nine long months were spent. Bears and walrus were shot for food and light, and when the spring came again, the two, covered with grease, and black with soot, started south once more, and after another hundred miles of paddling and hauling over the ice, happened to hear one day the barking of a dog. Following the sound, Nansen soon found himself in the comfortable hut of the Jackson Expedition, where the hardships and dangers of surely the most wonderful journey ever undertaken by man came to an end.

The most striking characteristic of Nansen's expeditions is the wonderfully simple means he used to attain his ends. Everything was so thoroughly practical, his sledges could be drawn by one man. Instead of heavy boats he used kayaks—canvas canoes copied from the Eskimo, which were easy to mend when damaged, and could be hauled up on the ice in a moment. They only weighed forty-one pounds, but being decked all over they would go through a great deal of bad weather.

Colin Archer must have built the *Fram* wondrously well, for she was nipped and squeezed in the terrible pack many times without hurt.

Helgeraa Fjord is the next inlet. It leads north-west up to Porsgrund and Brevik. Close to it is the Langesand Fjord. After this we pass thousands of rocky skerries. Inland there are great forests, and one river, the Skiens-Elv, brings down every year a million and a half of logs to the sea. The trees are felled in winter, the woodman enduring many hardships. He never takes with him more than he can carry in his *naenerkout*, a kind of knapsack that is made of birch-bark so closely platted that it is rendered watertight. A bag of flour, salt bacon, herrings, oatmeal cake, and dried mutton, form his rations. From his knapsack sticks the handle of his axe, and the

toes of a pair of boots. Outside are carried a coffee kettle, and an iron pan.

These woodmen travel on foot, or on snow-shoes, miles away into the forests, build their own huts, which are more often than not full of draughts, sleep on hay or moss, never undress, though now and then they dry their stockings; and yet, strange to say, with all its hardships, the Norse people long for this life.

The logs they cut during the winter are dragged by horses to the edge of a mountain side, where they slide down to the river below. In the early part of the summer, when the melting snows fill the rivers, the logs are floated. Then begins an exciting time for the gangs of men employed, who, ready with poles, jump from rock to log, pushing, easing, and directing the timber that is constantly being driven into corners and backwaters. The floater has often to wade in to his middle to cut loose with his axe or prod off into the river the logs which have stuck fast. The Norwegian tramp steamer, with its tremendous deck-load of timber, is a familiar object on all waters, and here one may see sailing craft too loading the sweet-scented fir, through great ports cut in their bows.

Skien, which we pass next, is the birthplace of Norway's dramatic and lyric poet, Henrik Ibsen, the eldest son of Knud Ibsen, a merchant of this small port, and his wife Maria Cornelia Attenburg. For five generations the family had consisted, on the father's side, of a blending of Danish, German, and Scottish races, with a little intermixture of pure Norwegian on the mother's side. Unfortunately, in 1836, Knud Ibsen became insolvent, and the family withdrew in great poverty to a cottage in the outskirts of the town.

After brief schooling at Skien, poor young Ibsen was sent to be apprenticed to an apothecary in Grimstad,

where he remained through seven long years of drudgery, which set their mark upon his spirit. In his nineteenth year he began to write poetry of a gloomy kind, and himself made a sinister impression on persons who met him. One of his associates of those days has recorded that Ibsen "walked about Grimstad like a mystery sealed with seven seals."

I have read through his works with sympathy for the man, but with little love for the characters he portrays. Where are they? Certainly not among the men and women we have known intimately, and looked up to as examples of what home life should be, upright, honest, manly, and most courteous.

I have said that Skien is the town that lies on the north bank of the Skiens-Elv, which here breaks through a rocky barrier in two falls, and forms a roomy harbour. Besides the glamour that surrounds it as being the birthplace of so great a man as Ibsen, it is also the starting-point of one of the greatest engineering feats in Norway, namely, the Nordsjo-Skien Canal, which connects the chief lake of Telemarken Nordsjo to Skien by three locks, called the Locks of Loveid, up the Skiens-Elv hewn like those of Trollhätten out of the rock, and on again from Nordsjo to the Bandak lakes.

The canal opens up an inland waterway 65 miles in length from the sea into the very heart of the mountains at Dalen, at the west end of Lake Bandak. The height of Bandak above the level of Nordsjo is 187 feet, which is overcome by means of fourteen locks, five of which are at Vrangfos. The rise in each lock is, on an average, rather more than 13 feet. The work offered great difficulties, as some of the fourteen locks could not be hewn out of the rock, but had to be formed by the aid of enormous dams of masonry. The dam at

Vrangfos, which is the largest, is 121 feet high, and raises the level of the water 75 feet. The waterfall thus produced is something really worth seeing. Both as regard scenery and construction this spot deserves a visit, besides the chance of meeting an elk in the adjacent forests.

"Where Christiansand stands, at the mouth of the Saetarsdal, a stream of ice once entered the Skagerack. Saetarsdal, as its name implies, is the mountain pasture-land of the low country. In the autumn the cattle are driven down in great droves. At the mouth of the glen I walked down with the procurator of the district to see what he called a "drift." I thought it was a raft, and was surprised to find some forty cows and a couple of hundred sheep and goats waiting to be ferried over a broad river. They were driven down to a sandy point, with logs stranded upon it, and a wooded hillock rising behind. There they were, huddled together, bleating and lowing, and switching their tails in the calm water. The goats perched themselves on the logs, and men stood amongst them; while a flat ferry-boat, with a load of small creatures, was slowly rowing from the land.

It was calm, and the hills had now begun to be worth looking at; the light was good, so the drift made a pretty picture so far. "The procurator had bought a cow, someone else a goat; and these two were to remain behind. Boat-load after boat-load of small cattle were pitched and tossed in, and ferried over; and the poor sold goat was left alone bleating lamentably. Then the cows were driven down to the water's edge; three or four were put into the boat; and amidst loud shouts of 'Keesa, keesa!' away went the herd over the still water, snorting and blowing. Some went up stream, some down, but all tried to lay their noses on their neighbours' backs, and the

boat had hard work to keep order. One obstinate cow was hauled over by the horns; but all landed safe and sound at last; and they walked deliberately up the opposite bank, cropping grass and lowing as if they were used to swimming two hundred yards."

At another station I met a party of drovers with six hundred and fifty beasts. They were dressed in native costume. "All clothes in this glen have an upward tendency, which it is hard to account for. But so had we, for the matter of that, some hundred years ago, when small boys' trousers were banded and braced close under their armpits. We either took the fashion from the men of the Saetarsdal, or they took it from us, and being slow-moving there it is still."

In other countries people have waists, more or less, short or long; here they have none. Men fasten the waistbands of their trousers round their necks, and put their arms out of the pockets. Waistcoats are put on like neckcloths, and the general effect is that of Mr. Nobody, as drawn by Cruikshank. The women, in like manner, fasten their petticoats round their necks; but they forgot to lengthen them when the fashion came in; consequently their coats are kilted. They wear many different colours, each skirt appearing under the upper one, and the whole turn up at the edge. It is not unlike the bright coloured cloth dress of the Lapp, but the shortness of the Lapp costume is not so noticeable, as they wear gaiters strapped round their legs.

Saetarsdal is now a wide pastoral glen, but every rock in it is ice-ground for a distance of 112 miles, as far as the road extends north.

At Valle, after passing through a wild narrow pass between bare rocks of great height, the glen widens into a broad green strath, dotted with stones as big as houses,

set in the velvet turf as if planted there on purpose. The houses are built of vast logs as big as three modern Norwegian fir-trees. Their corners are carved posts, their roofs project, there are galleries and carved door frames, and all about them is old, dark brown, and strange. "At the roadside stood a tall, well-shaped, straight-limbed, pretty girl, with a plaid thrown over her shoulders, and her head rolled in a large shawl. She wore a jacket about six inches long, and a waistcoat to match. She had silver breast buckles, bits of red worsted embroidery here and there, and several petticoats of various colours, the longest of which just reached the knee. She had a magnificent pair of garters, with bright silver buckles, and a neat pair of legs in blue worsted hose. As she stood knitting behind a little fir tree, she was the very picture of a wild mountain milkmaid. She vanished like one of her own kids when she found that she had been seen.

This is said to be the oldest glen in Norway: the language is mixed with strange words, some of which sound like Welsh or Breton. It is said that Scotch colonists were planted here after a plague had thinned the natives. Old as this human history is, older ice-marks are perfectly fresh in Saetarsdal, and sea-shells yet stick to rocks about the level of the King's palace at Christiania.

Christiansand stands upon ice-ground rocks. All the islands, for miles out to sea, are *roches montonnêes*, peering above the waves. The road leads inland through a wild pass, with hills on either side, with dark pines growing in chinks in the grey rock. The bottom of this pass is filled with a plain of boulders and sand, which look as if ice had dropped them yesterday. A good mountaineer can walk in a few days from Valle where waters run south, to the head of the Hardanger, or to Bukke Fjord, whose waters run west and south-west.

Christiansand might be called a square town, with water on three sides of it. All the streets run either north-east or south-east, exactly at right angles. To the south is the fortified Adderoen, which divides the Nestre Haven from the Ästre Haven, and to the north is the river called Otteraa, which is crossed by a wooden bridge to Lund. It is the seat of one of the five bishops of Norway; is pretty, big, and clean; has a fine harbour, from which regular lines of steamers run to England, Scotland, Germany, and Denmark. The population is fourteen thousand seven hundred.

Christiansand is the most important town in the south of Norway, and from it, beginning in Jordenskjolds-Gaden, winds the long, pleasantly shaded road that leads to the ever-fascinating quaint valley of Saetarsdal.

Through the mist we can make out the Naze or Lindisnäs, a conical lighthouse perched on a rounded mass of rock, seamed and rent from crest to base. Outlying rocks stand among the breakers, and the foam dashes high up the cliff. In 1650 the first lighthouse in all Norway was built on this cape, the most southern land in the country. A red-sailed fishing-boat is running before the gale, looking wonderfully small, as she rises and falls, on the breaking seas.

Now we are off Farsund, a little seaport, almost destroyed by fire in 1901. After it comes the light-house of Lister, and here there is no protection from the breeze which, blowing right along the indented coast, raises a nasty head sea. Ekersund, famous for its porcelain, goes by, dimly seen over the crests of the rollers.

Now the character of the coast is quite changed. Instead of the smooth, round rocks, which repeat the same outline over and over again, there are fertile meadows sloping gently to the sea from the distant hills

inland. This is the land of Jäderen, dotted everywhere with red-roofed cottages, each seeming to be perched on its own little acre and never gathered together into villages as in other lands. Miles inland we can see the snowy peaks of Listermandal and Stavanger, some peaked like sugar loaves, others humped like the camel.

In that little inlet, ten hundred and thirty-five years ago, was fought the famous sea-battle which made Harald Haarfagre king of all the long, narrow land of Norway. One wonders how many years it took him to travel to the distant parts of his new kingdom. Of course, the channel inside the belt of islands must have been then, as now, the great highway of the people of all ranks. Here the coast is quite unprotected, except for one or two detached hummocks standing far out in the foam-flecked, tumbling waters, and though our ship is both long and wide, and is really a very steady ship, the motion on board is distinctly unpleasant. The shining wet decks and long rows of empty chairs look mournful.

It is curious how often Norwegian artists paint this flat country of Jäderen. One sees pictures of carts being loaded with seaweed, knee-deep in the breakers, of the dreary heaths and the winding country roads. One artist, a Mr. Bennatter, has fitted up the ruins of a twelfth-century church and made it into a studio. Perhaps one reason for the affection they have for its rather tame beauties is that it is so very unlike any other part of Norway.

Stavanger is a very old town, but it has been burnt so many times that it looks modern. It is quite a busy place, with a big fleet of trading vessels. The cathedral is the finest in Norway, after that of Trondhjem. It was founded by an English bishop, Reinald, and dedicated

to our St. Swithin of Winchester. In the treatment of the interior detail this church presents a striking resemblance to the Knights' Hall, Rochester, which was built by Gundulph about the same time. It has no transept, triforium, or central tower. The arches are supported on great circular columns, very handsome and massive, five on each side, in the northern Romanesque style.

The ship is still plunging through the waves, and now the passengers, who still brave the elements, have dwindled to a very small party. The island of Karmo comes in sight on the starboard bow, and all sorts of jagged rocks go by as we plunge northward. A long journey outside the skjaergaard is not a pleasant prospect in weather like this, but all at once we notice that our wake is no longer right astern, but trends away to the starboard quarter. We look ahead and see that Karmo is drawing away to the port bow. It is clear that kind-hearted Captain Thompson has made up his mind to take us up inside the islands. The sight of many pale faces, and all those empty chairs, has moved him to take the longer, and to him, no doubt, more troublesome route. Soon we are under the lea of Skudesnäs, and one by one limp, red-eyed bodies, with hair out of curl and rumpled clothes, make their appearance, blessing the skjaergaard and good Captain Thompson.

Karmo is a long, low island. Like the rest of its brothers and sisters of the skjaergaard or belt, it has two aspects. On the west side the breakers are eternally thundering, but on the east the water is smooth, and the wooden houses jut out into the channel, each standing on a sort of little terrace built of the smooth round boulders which have been carried down from far inland by the old glaciers and dropped in ridges on the water's edge. Many graves and barrows of the old Vikings stand on the

MELTING SNOWS

BY FREDRIK COLLET

moors. Soon we are passing a small red lighthouse standing alone on a rocky island, all covered with stunted firs. Patches of green grass show here and there among the rocky hillocks, and in the distance three factory chimneys rise against the grey sky; the red roofs of the little wooden houses are sprinkled far apart, as though in fear of a fire spreading from one to the other.

According to our pilot, Kopervik is the centre of the universe. It has a thousand inhabitants, and a neat white church, with a little tower at one end of the gable; the average death-rate is only twelve per thousand, so this mild, damp climate must be very healthy.

On we steam, the dark green waters of the Karmösund forming bays and inlets, or *viks*, as they are called by the natives. Jomfru Marias Synaal is a bautasten 26 feet high, erected in honour of some long-dead chief. It leans towards the old church of Augvaldsnäs. An ancient prophecy says that when it falls this world will come to an end. Farther up on the other side of the sound are five more upright stones, called the "Five Foolish Virgins." Haugesund stands on the mainland a little to the south of the tombstone of Harald Haarfagre, the chief who swore that his hair should never be cut until he was king of all Norway.

In 1872 the thousandth anniversary of the sea-fight of Hafsfjord, an obelisk of red granite, 55 feet high, and called Haralds-Stotte, was erected in honour of Norway's first king. All around are smaller stones, representing the districts into which the country was divided in old days. The port is quite important, and the masts and yards of many timber ships peep over the rocky hillocks and green pastures, the red tiles of the clustering houses, or the steel-blue of the harbour, showing here and there in the hollows.

After this we come to an open bit of coast, for the skjaergaard no longer protects us from the swell of the ocean, which rolls in long even waves. We are glad to slip under the shelter of Bömmelö, where a strange flat-topped mountain, called Siggen, rises to a height of 1540 feet. Though its base is smooth and ice-worn, the crest seems sharp cut and square. I wonder if the upper part of the peak stood out of the glacier in the old Ice Age, like an island in the sea of snow, and thus escaped the grinding and polishing that all the other hills hereabouts seem to have undergone. There are gold mines on the island, though nowadays they do not produce much.

Now we are steaming close under the shadow of the great hummocky-seamed peaks. The snow still lies in hollows aloft, and the grey rock is hidden here and there by stunted fir and patches of spare grass. In the narrow sloping cliffs, close down to the water, are vivid squares of green, where the peasant farmer has perched upon some little patch of soil smooth enough to raise a crop of hay. The children rush out of the wooden cabins to wave a greeting. What a contrast to the sombre browns and greys of their stony surroundings are the red roofs and white and yellow fronts of these scattered homes!

In between the countless islands one catches glimpses of the open sea, a straight hard-cut line dark against the brilliant sky. Great breakers are thundering on the rocks at the foot of the tall white lighthouse, and in some of the wider inlets the swell rolls right in and dashes with fury at the smooth ice-worn stones. Sometimes the strata lines are tilted up steeply, making snug harbours for the little fishing-boats; or the bright green of a patch of hay makes another sudden contrast among the black clusters of rounded hummocky rocks. Then again, beyond the breakers, we catch another glimpse of the

ruled line of the boundless horizon. All around for miles there is nothing to be seen but the smooth rocks, repeating over and over again the form we have got to know so well. Cold and grey, seamed here and there with veins of white quartz, only very scanty grass clings in the hollows and crannies. There are thousands of these rocks, some awash and covered with brown weed, others submerged, and only marked by the higher and steeper heave of the swell, and the flicker of foam on the crest, where it tries to break for a moment before rolling on eastward through the deeper water.

Now we are passing a skerry, where the yeasty waters are in violent turmoil, flinging the spray high into the air in their wild dance. Farther on is a black rock standing clear above the surf. A beacon of stone has been built on it to distinguish it from its countless fellow-rocks, for all seem to be made in the same mould. As we look inland we see the hummocks rise ridge behind ridge until at last, all blended with the clouds and mists we can dimly make out the forms of giant mountains: Flatholm Fyr and the mouth of the Hafsfjord.

CHAPTER V

THE WONDROUS, BEAUTIFUL HARDANGER

THE rocky island of Utsire, topped by twin, squat lighthouses, stands like a sentinel 12 long miles from the mainland. Between it and Bömmelö Fjord lie quite a little archipelago of jagged, stony islets, Röver, Lyngsö, Facö, and countless unnamed rocks, over which the great ocean swells break, so that there is a more or less sheltered channel inside, between Karmo and Storo. Here the passage forks, one lead running north towards Bergen, and the other twisting up, and even widening into the wonderful Hardanger Fjord. The sounds, and arms of the sea, stretch in all directions right into the heart of the great mountains, and as we steam onward fresh vistas are constantly opening. The peaks are rent and torn in some places, smooth and polished in others, and there is always as a background the great glistening covering of eternal snow, which is called the Folge Fond. This enormous mass is without any distinct peak, and simply lies like a great white table-cloth all over the high ground. It throws off glaciers wherever a cleft in the rocks allows the pushing mass to force a way down the precipice, where it hangs suspended, like a great breaker frozen in the act of curling. This huge snowfield is about 20 miles long from north to south, and about 10 miles across at the widest part.

The lower waters of the Hardanger, through a maze of twists and turns, run for the most part towards the north-east. Smaller channels branch off from it in all directions. Mauranger Fjord, with lofty cliffs, pushes right into the rocky hills almost to the snow. Strandebarms Bugt, a big bay, stretches north. Then the fjord narrows to a mile and a half at Ljonäs Aus,—again widening into the Ytre Samlen quite 5 miles across.

Just above Bakke, there is a great stretch of bare polished rock, which slopes from a height down to the water's edge. There is not a blade of grass or a shrub to be seen on it, the whole has a very bleak and forbidding air. Its smooth surface is due to the great glaciers of the Ice Age, when the whole fjord was choked with slowly-moving pack ice. Beyond these bare black rocks, Samle Nut, a jutting peak, covered with a forest of fir trees from crest to base, pushes out, narrowing the waterway again to 2 miles, and separating the Ytre from the Indne Samlen.

On the opposite side is the hamlet of Östensö, where a great rock (Heaven only knows how many tons it weighs) seems to have toppled over from the mountains overhead, and has perched itself right in the middle of a neat little hayfield. I daresay it all happened a long time ago, long before there were any people settled here; at the same time, the great stone looks a very terrible intruder, in the midst of the fragile wooden houses set among the smiling fields.

Just a little farther is the narrow entrance of the Fikensensand, 9 miles long, just a rent in the mountains. As we steam over to the north-east we come to where Melaanfos thunders down from the hills in a cloud of spray, making the village at the water's edge

seem only a toy. The dark firs stretch up even to the clouds, and here and there patches of snow shine white among grey rocks.

Norway was not always a democratic country. There were plenty of earls in the old Viking days, and our English title "earl" is taken from the Norse. Later, the great English preacher Hakluyt, in his navigations, voyages, traffiques, and discoveries, often mentions knights in Norway, though it would be hard to say what the native equivalent for this title would be. Here in Hardanger there were Barons of Rosendal, from 1678 down to 1821, when all noble titles were abolished by law.

Ludwig the First was a Dane of old family who came and settled in Horland, where he married a rich Norwegian lady; after which Christian v. of Denmark created him baron. He held many high offices. A list of them is still to be seen over his tomb in Kvindherred parish church. Axel, who was called "Baron Clubfoot," succeeded him; he is said to have had rather a poor time with his insolent servants. He fell through a hole in the floor of his own house, and broke his neck in 1723, so the title became extinct. Soon after, the Crown of Denmark sold the barony of Rosendal, with all its privileges and charters, to another Dane, Ditten Wibe, Knight of the Elephant, and Governor of Norway. The price was 20,000 rix-dollars, about £4000. When Ditten Wibe died, Lerche of Lerchenfeld bought it for 18,000 rix-dollars. In 1745 it was again sold to Edvard Londeman, a professor of theology, who afterwards became Bishop of Bergen. The King of Denmark gave him a patent for himself and his heirs, to bear the new title of Baron de Rosenkrone. He only enjoyed the honour for a week, dying, and being succeeded by his

son, Baron Marchus, who, however, never lived at Rosendal. This Baron Marchus was Minister for Foreign Affairs at Copenhagen. Major Hoff, who was a great-grandson of the first Baron de Rosenkrone, a native of Bohemia, came next, and after him in 1837 Marchus Gerhard, his son. The title died with the older Hoff, and soon after the property lost many of its rights and privileges. It now pays rates and taxes just like any other part of Norway.

Before reaching Odde it is the Folgefond that attracts and holds the attention. This great field of snow is the second largest in Norway, covering an area of 120 square miles. As we steamed up the fjord the daylight was waning. The steep sides of the cliffs had turned the deepest purple, and high above lay this line of snow. Wherever possible it forced its way over the edge. At first a wedge of pure white, which as it came down the cliff turned into rills and feathery streaks of water. What the depth is no one knows, but from the nature of its surroundings it is beyond doubt that it fills an enormous depression. The general direction of this vast expanse of eternal snow is north and south. It lies in the hollow of a broad ridge, or plateau, at a height of 5500 feet above the sea. The mountains on which it rests rise abruptly from the sea, presenting a large area above the snow-line. These receive the full benefit of the moisture of the south-westerly winds in the shape of snow. There are no higher mountains anywhere near, and consequently the Folgefondfjeld intercepts the snow-laden winds, and prevents an accumulation on the fjelds situated to the eastward.

At the moment all our interests were centred in the Folgefond, on account of a wild freak that had entered the head of an elderly spinster we had met on board

a little fjord steamer. The lady was unaccompanied, and gloated over the fact that she had given her friend and the hotel-keeper the slip, saying, "I knew they would not let me go if I said anything about it, but now I am here I mean to cross the Folgefond." All the way to Sandven we hunted our Baedeker, and found out for this lady that the price for a guide for two persons would be 8 kroner. No price was quoted for one. That the pass was not too difficult, and that riding was practicable to the top. At this she ejaculated, "Ah, that will suit me. I can ride splendidly; have done so all my life. What did you say the cost of the horse would be?" I again opened my Baedeker and read out 12 kr.; that she would have to start from Sundal on the Mauranger Fjord; that there was an hotel there where she would have to stay the night, as it was impossible to make the start that day; the hotel stood near to the gaard of Bondhus, and that Samson Olsen, Sundal, was a competent guide.

Then I told her all I knew and had read. That, to begin with, it was a beautiful voyage to Odde, and that the scenery as the Mauranger is approached displays the most picturesque grouping of high mountains. She would have to leave at 6 a.m., and it would take her seven or eight hours to arrive at Sundal, where she would be in time for dinner. "I should not want to dine," she remarked; "I have some sandwiches." "I dare say," I said, "but would they not be rather dry by then, or would it not be better to keep these provisions for the Folgefond, as not so long ago the supplies provided by the hotel-keeper were not very good?" This trifle was waved aside, and I continued: "Well, you would have to start early with a short trip by boat to the head of the fjord, land at Gjerde, a cluster of cottages. Once clear of the

village your road lies through fields traversed by a roaring torrent, which farther on breaks over the rocks in fine cascades. Then through a wood, and you emerge in full view of the really magnificent Sondefos, tumbling from a great height, and throwing up clouds of spray, through which you will have to pass. Then you will find yourself in a tremendous amphitheatre, the walls rising in front and on either side to a height of some two or three thousand feet. You will wish you had never started, but your guide will show you the way over a rough but not difficult road. I suppose you can climb? —for the ascent is very steep, and you will have to rest constantly. All the way you see the waterfall, which looks finer and grander as you ascend. You next reach more level ground, and look down upon the dark gorge you have just passed through to the spot where the Mauranger Fjord lies gleaming in the distance.

"Again another tier of precipices, with a faintly indicated and easily lost track along the mountain side under a screen of rock, which rounded brings you to the head of the waterfall,—the Sondefos by which you have been walking and climbing. At your feet the waters that supply it rush and roar, from a lake at a little distance, which receives the waters of another and smaller fall. This raging torrent crosses your path, and I really do not think you will like it. There are only a few slippery rocks to the middle of the stream, and then a little plank bridge to the other side, a narrow little foothold between the wall of rock and roaring stream. Everyone says it is the nastiest bit in the day's march.

"You would then have to wait a few minutes whilst your guide finds the boat to cross the lake. The desolate valley is strewn with huge boulders, where, in a sheltered corner, stands the Tourist Hut. You might have to

stay there the night should you be too tired to go on. There remain a good thousand feet still to climb on a steep and rugged road. Creeping up these bare rocks is like mounting the steps of a ladder, with an occasional plateau as a change.

"Horses manage this piece of the road wonderfully well. The sturdy little animals scramble up the steep slippery rocks without a stumble. About this height you reach the snow-line, and have to cross several broad patches, which may be very heavy work, according to whether the sun is shining or not. After a while the great snow-field begins in real earnest. It has a hard frozen surface, with here and there a slippery piece telling of the glacier just beneath. You walk or ride on till you reach the half-dozen sledges, kept under the shelter of a cluster of rocks which rise like islands in the midst of the great sea of ice and snow. The horses are harnessed, and can pull but slowly till they reach the highest point. If the weather is only fine and clear you think nothing more of the climb. You revel in the grand and awe-inspiring spaciousness, in the peculiar, solemn silence, which holds the air when the winds are at rest.

"Around the margin of this great white ocean rises a border of dark, rugged mountain tops of every shape and outline. You can see nothing of the fjords. They lie quietly sleeping at your feet, deep down in the bottom of the dark valleys. To the south lies the Sör branch of the Hardanger, and straight across this invisible gulf you can see the dark ravine of the Skjaeggedal, with a glimpse of the gloomy Kingedalsvand beyond. Above the ravine rises the curious square top of the Haarteigen, and away and away the giant peaks of the Hardanger. Having admired the prospect, the horses again start off at a gallop. If you have ever experienced the pleasure of

running before a strong wind in a small boat, you will recognise the same sensation as you spin along over the crisp snow, with a rapidity and smoothness which constitute the acme of locomotion. The wind sings in your ears and the horses' hoofs pelt you with little lumps of snow. This lasts, with ups and downs, for an hour and a half.

"Down you slip, stumble and run, till you are off the snow and among the rocks again, some hundred feet below the summit of the Folgefond. Now you come to a monotonous bit of hard work, and if the sun is out a most fatiguing one. In a short time you catch sight of Sör Fjord, and the road then follows the course of the Tokheimsfos. From its head to the fjord level is strikingly picturesque. At Tokheim you can enjoy a rest, or proceed to Odde, which is about two miles off."

Nothing I might say, however, deterred the lady, until in my room in the hotel at Sandven she started counting her money. "I have just 25 kr.," she remarked. "Then you cannot do it," I replied;—"even if you joined a party at Sundal it would cost you 15 kr. Besides, there is your fare from here to Sundal, meals, and a night's lodgings. My advice is, take the next steamer back to Eide, fetch more money, and tell the hotel-keeper where you are going." The lady replied: "I will fetch the money, but will not tell them where I am going." It was with a sense of relief that we saw her off on board the next steamer bound for Eide. Weeks after we had arrived home I received a post-card with these few laconic words: "I never got there."

The approach to Odde was very beautiful in the soft twilight. Here we had reached the end of the Sör Fjord, and the terminus of the great routes from Telemarken and Stavanger Fjord. Lights were twinkling in the big Hardanger Hotel that stands on the left-hand side of the

fjord, with the church, and a group of lesser hotels, backed by orchards and trees. Odde is a place for waterfalls; you come to them one after the other if you follow the Telemarken road. It is possible to ride or walk, but if one is strong enough nothing is better than a good walk after the lazy luxury of board-ship. We followed the road past the landing place of the Jordal steam-boat, under menacing rocks, and over débris, enjoying the brisk air and the lovely background of the Jordal, Burbrae, and Folgefond. Farther on we came to the Kjondalsfos and the Strandsfos, descending from the Svarteunt on the other side. Here we sat down for a little to enjoy the roar of the falls, and ate the sandwiches we had brought with us. Then on we went to Hildal, where tumbled the Hildalsfos. Passing on to the bridge we had to draw to one side to allow a herd of goats to pass. We had to walk some way beyond Gronsdöl before we came to the wonderful fall called Lotefos, which unites its waters with the Skarsfos. Opposite them is the diaphanous veil-like Espelandsfos, one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Norway.

No wonder Odde is popular. It deserves to be, as it has all that makes a holiday enjoyable. Good housing and splendid walks, and the pass of the Folgefond for the more adventurous, and the difficult and sometimes fatiguing journey to the Skjaeggedal. A few nice shops adorn the village. Nowhere have I met such trusting shopkeepers. One informed me that he would send some embroideries that I lingered over to my address in England. "You can send me a cheque from there," he said. "Have you never been taken in?" I asked. "No," was his answer; "and I suppose I will go on trusting in the English till I am." Good man! May it be a long time before he meets with the rogue.

The much-talked-of Sunday costumes we did not see. The long dining-hall of the Hardanger Hotel was bright in the extreme. The maids in their pretty costumes waited on the company deftly and well; for these the bright ornamentally carved wood-work and painted frieze of goblins formed quite the right setting.

If the weather be fine one should certainly go to Utne. It is situated at the commencement of the Sör Fjord, which is one of the terminal branches of the Hardanger. Here is a wonderful combination of savage grandeur and striking beauty. Lofty mountains slope steeply down to the water, thrusting forward sharp promontories. In between are sheltered bays with verdant banks of gently sloping, cultivated land. Comfortable, clean-looking farms are dotted here and there. A fair-haired farmer told us many things about the beauty of the view seen from the top of Hanekanob, at whose feet lie the Utne Fjord, Eid, and Sör Fjords, and of the game that can be shot in the neighbourhood. He spoke of the chances of a good crop this season, and of his friends in America. He stood a characteristic figure, the true type of the Scandinavian.

Utne was famous in Saga times as the Thingstead, or place of assembly of the ancient parliament. It was then probably of more importance than now. The government of Norway by Things, a thousand years or so ago, was rather remarkable for these times. It was perhaps as well organised a system of local government as was then in existence anywhere in Europe. There were several kinds of Things, ranging in importance, and in their powers. According to the Sagas, there were four principal Things responsible for the government of Norway,—namely, the Borsarthing in the south, Eidesvoldthing in the centre, Frostathing in the north (Trondhjem), and the

Gulathing in the west (Hardanger Fjord and Sogne Fjord). Besides these, and more or less in co-operation with and subservient to them, there were numerous minor or local Things, which were courts of assize for small districts.

Konungsthing was a Thing summoned by the King himself. Maundrapsthing, a Thing summoned in consequence of a murder; Mauntalsthing, for the equalisation of the tax; and Vapnathing, to examine if every man possessed the weapons prescribed by law. All members of the Thing, according to law, had an equal vote.

The Thing summons in case of murder was an arrow that was sent from farm to farm, and called upon all Thing men to meet the fifth day after the summons. In the funny old regulations this summons was "to be carried, and not dropped." It was to go "between the winter houses, and not between the soeters." No delay was to occur in weather fit for travelling except at night, "should sleep be necessary, but not unless." The men who carried the arrow were to cut three notches on the door-post or door, and put the summons over the lintel. All baendr, but those being single-handed workers or disabled, were obliged to attend the summons or pay a Thing-fine. The Thing was held in an open place called Thingvöll. In early days the site was near a temple, and after the introduction of Christianity near a church. The spot chosen was by a hill, from which all announcements were made.

The Thing plain, according to Du Chaillu, was a sacred place, which must not be sullied by bloodshed arising from blood-feud or any other impurity, and the Thing from the time it was opened until it was dissolved was, during pagan times, under the protection of the gods. Any breach of the peace was a sacrilege which put the

guilty one out of the pale of the law. Between the sessions of the Thing amusements took place, and battles and prowess was retold by the scalds assembled. Time has made very little change in the system; the Amt, Fogderi, and Formanskab are merely different kinds of Things with modern names. As matters stand to-day, every parish has its Formanskab, or board of guardians, with a chairman. A certain number of parishes go to a Fogderi, presided over by a Foged; and a certain number of Fogderis go to an Amt or county, — the principal official being called the Amtmand. The responsible officials are the Foged and his assistants, the Lendsmands; the latter, one to each parish, doing all the dirty work. Once a year the Amtmand meets the representatives of the Fogderis and of the Formanskabs in solemn assembly, whereat the affairs of the county are discussed.

The promontory lying opposite Utne is known as the Oksenfjeld, and from its summit there is the most superb view imaginable. It is historically a place of some interest, having been used in 1807 as a station whence to signal the approach of the English fleet, which it was imagined might descend on Norway. Even now one sees the remains of the old watch-tower, and not so long ago the pole and tar barrel which served for the warning beacon were to be found close at hand. This system of beacon signals was adopted in Norway as far back as the time of Haakon I. It was calculated that within a week the news of an enemy's approach could be transmitted by means of beacons from one end of the kingdom to another. The Government proclamation relating to the outbreak of hostilities between Denmark and England in 1807, and the orders on the subject of the Oksen beacon, are still in existence.

The instructions to Lensmand Christen Jonsen Hangse

are of considerable length, and lay down minute details as to the methods to be adopted in the event of an English fleet appearing in the Hardanger. Thus two watchmen were to look out from Oksenfjeld day and night. If any other beacon was seen alight, or any hostile vessels observed, the tar barrel was to be at once fired, and news of what had been seen immediately despatched. Express boats and land conveyances were to be kept constantly in readiness to take the news to Bergen. The Lensmand was also instructed to arrest all Englishmen in his district, and to take possession of their property. As matters turned out, the beacon was never lighted.

Overhanging the fjord, above the farm of Tjoflat on the Oksen headland, can be seen a very remarkable boulder, which the natives of these parts call Runahedlo (runic stone). According to the legend, Utkjel, petty King of Utne, once visited the spot and placed a runic inscription on the stone which ran thus: "Turn me round, and thou shalt see a wonderful thing; but ill befall thee if thou pulst me not back as thou foundst me." Age and the elements have unfortunately obliterated the inscription, and now only a few strokes are to be seen. As to how it got into its extraordinary position, some say that "God Himself placed it there when He created the world"; and others, that it was brought to the spot by the Deluge. As a matter of fact, it is a very good example of an erratic perched block, resulting from the great ice sheet which once covered the land."

The Graven Fjord, the fjord down from Eide, runs straight for some way and quite narrow, with mountains on either side, Eide resting, so to speak, in a cul-de-sac with a semicircle of mountains behind. As we steam

THE FOLGEFOND FROM NORHEIMS SD.

away, snow-capped peaks top the nearer ranges, till Eide disappears from sight, shut out by first one bluff and then another. The next panorama opens out, a lovely circle of bald peaks, snow-capped, and with long narrow strips of snow running down their steep faces,—a spot where four fjords meet the mouths winding away, each with its own rock formation. Then come two wooded islands, with an opening between, through which one seems to enter fairyland. Wonderful peeps of blue water and hazy distance, lovely delicate colouring,—a perfect feast for the eyes.

The steamer stops at a little quay where the whole town is assembled, the one event of the day being the arrival of the steamer with the news of the world. Then on again, sharply to the right between wooded hills with a few stretches of sweet grass meadow running down to the water's edge. Farms closer together, with neat houses and fair sized patches of tilled ground, increase in importance and size, till again the steamer stops at Norheimsund. This is a delightful spot that branches off from the Graven Fjord towards the east, into a lovely placid lake from which the hills rise gently clothed to the top with trees.

The hotel-keeper, Mr. Sandven, receives you on the quay, greeting all in a courtly fashion; and the hotel porter, who might be English if it were not for his American accent, comes forward and takes you at once into his charge. Nothing is too much trouble; all is done without officiousness, and you are introduced to one of the most comfortable hotels in Norway.

Over and over again the words "beautiful, wondrous Hardanger" repeat themselves. Here from the balcony the Norheimsund stretches away, a placid, beautiful opal lake, a looking-glass in which the heavens reflect their

tender colours, the islets, the cottages, the green of the banks, boat-houses and fairy boats. In the distance scarred peaks thrust themselves out sharply from the covering of snow which lies in the deep ravines and fissures, floating mists catch the rays of sun and reflect back the tender shades of pink. Above all, the great snow tableland of the Folgefond,—great, smooth, round-backed waves of pure thick snow stretching for miles, shining and shimmering all aglow in the rosy evening light. A boat pushes off from the hotel jetty with a lady, taking her two small children for a row before bed-time. Her scarlet sunshade, their faces, oars, boat, and every small detail are mirrored in the placid water. Other merry parties put off, their laughter and prattle rising to our level in the still air. A band of boys come down to bathe, and warm ponies just back from a long excursion are brought down for a swim round the causeway.

Being quite sure that surroundings such as these must inspire music, we went down to the hall porter and, questioning him, found out there were two fiddlers belonging to the place, one near at hand, a cobbler. Disappointment met us at the outset. The cobbler would willingly have played, but his fiddle was broken. The other was a young fellow who lived some way down the valley, "He might play perhaps." The porter wrote on a piece of pink paper in Norwegian that we were a lady and gentleman who much wished to hear the wedding tunes on the Hardanger violin, and would he oblige us by playing? Thus armed we started on our quest with our pink paper and careful directions, which were: "Follow the main road along the river until you come to a white house that stands back on the road on the left-hand side, in its own fields close to the waterfall."

The walk along the hard, sandy road was delightful, the river rushing swiftly, making a great fuss as it swirled round and over the boulders that strewed its bed. Broad stretches of grain fields glowed an intense dark green, the shade so difficult to paint or describe, grass with a red glow over all. Though nearly nine o'clock, the men and women were still hanging the cut grass on the hurdles. It did not seem easy to find one particular white house, there were so many little white houses; the question was, which was the one? Seeing a stolid looking lady walking ahead, we quickened our pace and, overtaking her, presented the little piece of paper. She puzzled over, read it, and looked up once or twice with a little grin; rubbed her hand softly over the top of her shawled head, looked at us, laughed, shook her head, and went on her way.

We felt very like Henny-penny in the story of "The sky is falling and I'm going to tell the king." Like her, we gaed and we gaed and we gaed, till we came to two men by the roadside. The younger looking the more intelligent, we gave our paper to him; he shook his head. Reading over the younger man's shoulder, the second read it once, then again. His face lit up, and he pointed to a white house lying well back from the road at the foot of the hill.

Taking a short cut across the grass we arrived at a farm or gaad of some size, but with no appearance of life in it. On opening one or two doors we only looked into storerooms, so circumnavigating the house we knocked and knocked again, and were just leaving when we heard the shuffling of feet, and a sleepy looking woman opened to us. The little piece of paper she turned over and over again. I tried to explain by taking the attitude of a fiddler; but it was all of no use. She thrust the paper

into my hand, and slowly but firmly shut the door in our faces. A friendly pet lamb gamboled round, and seemed to be the only living thing about the place.

Feeling abashed and disappointed, we slowly turned from the door, but surely there should be some of the inmates at work in the fields. It was worth while to try a little longer; so following a grassy road we walked farther afield till the sound of voices reached our ears. Sure enough, above us were three figures, a girl in the pretty Hardanger costume turning the hay on the hurdles, and two men scything the grass down the slope. The girl was like the old woman, shook her head, and would not even look at the paper. The men were different. The one I approached was like the figure in Walker's picture of "The Harbour of Refuge,"—a very "Strephon"; the other, a younger man with a broad, jovial face. "Strephon" took the paper and read slowly, with rising colour, a smile creeping over his face; the other read over his shoulder and looked up at us all excitement, nodding his head and tapping his brother with his finger.

I touched his arm and imitated a violin player. Strephon nodded his head, put down his scythe, and made a sign that he would come with us. He pointed out that his thumb was bound up, and made us understand his hands were stiff from work. Returning to the white house, he ushered us into a room, and made a sign that we should sit down whilst he went to wash his hands. The room was very tidy, a bed in the corner, chairs, and a table in the middle, on which rested the violin-case. All round the walls were hung with male and female garments, apparently the "best clothes" of the family. Nearly all the women's petticoats were trimmed with bands of plaid round the edge of the

skirts, and the hem bound with velvet. On the floor under each group of clothes were gaudily painted wooden boxes with scrolls on which were written the owner's name and a date.

Strephon entered with the lamb gamboling at his heels, which had to be pushed out and shut in another room. Then he opened the case as though it were something sacred, unfolded a large silk handkerchief, and carefully drew out his violin. He tuned it up, threw his head back, and after the manner of Ole Bull placed his violin low down against his chest, and closing his eyes he deftly began to play, his thin nostrils dilating and his throat swelling as the music went quicker and quicker. Like the fiddler in Björnson's "Bridal March," his tunes might have been inspired by the Trolls. Some were weird, others tender; some that made one's feet dance, and others so like the pipes (drone and all) that it was difficult to realise that the instrument was a violin. He might have been a descendant of "Ole Haugen," who lived at the great farm of Tingvold, and played the merriest Bridal March ever heard.

The youth stood still in the darkening room unconscious of all save his music, without a coat or collar, in his everyday check shirt and old turned-down straw. But his was music pure and simple. Nothing written, but all inspired, the tunes that had been handed down from his father before him, and the Trolls. Very fine he looked in the darkening room, playing with all his soul, his music accompanied by the distant roar of the great waterfall.

He ended with a sigh, laid down the violin he had been playing on, and brought out an old favourite on which he played for a short time longer. Then he unlocked one of the painted boxes and found a paper which he passed us to read. It was a certificate, dated 18th February

1906, from the school of music in Bergen, stating that the holder, Sjuer Gvothus, had won the first prize and a violin in a competition for all Norway for playing folk music. The violin was a pretty one, inlaid thickly with mother of pearl, and the handle finished off with a lion's head in ormolu.

It would be as well to say here that the Norwegian peasant fiddlers have never used notes; they play entirely "by heart" in more than one sense, and in another respect the peasant fiddlers have anticipated the latest stages of modern virtuosity. The players of the old Norwegian fele, or fiddle, have three different ways of tuning it: a—d—a^1—e^2; a—c^1—a^1—c^2; a—e^1—a^1—e sharp 2. Nor is this all, when Richard Strauss or a Martin Laeffler wants to give his orchestral score an ultra-modern colouring he introduces the *viola d'amore*, which has, besides the strings that are played on, an equal number placed below them, which vibrate sympathetically and enrich the tone. The Norwegian fele has four of these sympathetic strings. A drone bass of two tones a fifth apart accompanies the fele player's melody. It is the earliest form of the organ point, with which the great masters from Bach to Wagner have produced some of their grandest effects. This drone bass is a characteristic of northern instruments, and resembles the Scotch bagpipe.

A cordial handshake and we parted from our friend, and retraced our steps along the road. The air had got chilly and the night a pearly grey, as though one was looking at the landscape through a thick gauze veil. The wind blew the cold spray from the waterfall across the road into our faces, but through all the various sounds of nature over and over again rang the fiddler's tune.

Our Strephon may have been a descendant

of Medaas, who in his day was the finest musician in the Hardanger, according to all accounts, and whose services were much in request for weddings. It is told that on one occasion, when he was returning from a wedding in Kvam to his home at Graven, as he crossed the mountains after dark he heard beautiful music issuing from a mound, so he sat down and listened. He soon became aware that what he heard was no ordinary music, but that of the hill-fairies, whose powers of fiddling were well known. He sat on until he was satisfied that several of the airs were impressed on his memory, and from that time his fortune was made. Not only had he always more engagements than he could fulfil, but fiddlers came from far and near to be instructed in the Huldreslaater, which to this day are regarded as the most beautiful airs of the Hardanger.

Isak Nilson, of Boteren, is the father of Hardanger violins, known throughout Norway for their excellence. Isak Nilson lived rather more than two centuries ago on the farm of Boteren, at the head of the Fiksensund, and he is said to have invented this popular Hardanger musical instrument. According to the story, he got his idea from the old schoolmaster, who used to amuse himself by cutting bits of wood and tying strings across them, so as to produce sounds when touched; but it is more than likely that some traveller, at one time or another, showed him a violin, which he proceeded to copy.

Sandven's Hotel is most comfortable, charmingly situated, and far too good to stay for only a day. Weeks could be spent there quite happily. Mr. Sandven is not only an hotel-keeper,—he manages the bank, the post-office, a shop, and is the proprietor of carriages and boats. A glowing morning and the stolkjaerre waiting

at the door. The Öfsthus Fos was the thing to see in sunlight, so the small boy said as he mounted into his perch at the back of the car, and then we could go on up the new road to Torenut. A pity it was we were not staying longer.

The pony took a deal of talking to and coaxing; it did not mind going as far as the waterfall, but then it quite made up its mind that it would rather go backwards than forwards, obliging our young driver to jump down and break a stick from a tree hard by. "Not to whip him with," he explained, "but just to let him know it was there." Crossing the bridge we jumped from the car to walk up a steep incline to the small house that guarded the path under the waterfall, paid our toll, passed on to the wooden planks, and stood close to the dripping rock that jutted overhead.

With a thundering roar the great volume of water threw itself over the projection to the rocks a hundred feet below, a bewildering stream of sparkling threaded diamonds, in a haze of diamond dust, and little lumps like feathery cotton wool of massed drops. On either side against the grass on the edges the spray turned into rainbows of the loveliest hue, and under the torrent, their leaves shivering and quaking from the wind caused by the rushing water, grew graceful ferns. Spellbound we gazed, agreeing with the small boy that the Fos was the thing to be seen in sunlight.

The pony was shown the stick, and thought better of his first resolve to return home; but his own way was the only one he would follow. He would trot when he pleased, or walk when he pleased, and as there was no hurry, what mattered it? The day was lovely, the river flowed along an impetuous torrent, the sides getting more precipitous as the road ascended. Such a road,

too, clean, trim, and raked, protected all along the face of the precipice by big blocks of stone. Higher and higher on the inner side rose the cliff out of whose face the road had been blasted. At first the bank had been clothed with bushes, and lovely crimson fox-glove, swaying gracefully in the breezes. But as the rock became steeper the birch and firs were the only things that could cling to its sides, with an undergrowth of fern. A donkey passing, our pony disapproved and backed to the edge, giving one an uninterrupted view of the river, which now looked like a ribbon below. Another stolkjaerre and two men, a road-maker sprinkling and raking fine gravel; these were all we saw on three miles of beautifully kept expensive road. Proceeding still higher the road grew steeper, and the river turned into cascades, one above the other, till we reached the top, where the water brimmed over the edge of a beautiful calm blue lake, with cattle standing knee deep along the edges. Lush meadow grass waved all round, and the roof of the little saeter was just seen above the bushes. This col proved to be a verdant plain surrounded with snow-capped peaks.

CHAPTER VI

NATIONAL DANCES—THE BATTLE OF SVOLD

THE remoteness of Norway has not only impressed a peculiar local colour on its native music and costume, but has also helped to preserve its primitive character. Old-fashioned musical instruments, dances, and tunes, which used to be practised in other European places, found their last refuge in the North, which preserved them, somewhat altered by the imprint of its own peculiar stamp. In a region like Telemarken there are places where an old custom prescribes that the same song must not be sung in the dance rooms more than once a year.

In Hammerfest, the northernmost town in the world, it is possible to chance on a dance where the music is vocal instead of instrumental, the dancers attentive and responsive to the words as they are sung. At weddings, indeed, the first dances are sung to psalm tunes, and the preacher in his vestments takes part in them. Usually, however, the dances are too lively for vocal music, and the fiddle is brought into play.

The most popular of the folk-dances in the mountainous regions of Norway are the springdans, polska, and the halling. Of each of these there are admirable specimens among Grieg's works, partly borrowed, partly original, while others have been arranged for pianoforte by Kjerulf, Lindemann, etc. The springdans, so called to distinguish

THE BACHELOR

BY F. FAGERLIN

it from the ganger, or walking dance, is in three-four measure, the halling in two-four. The springdans is characterised by a striking combination of binary and ternary rhythms, and a progressive animation very exciting to the hearer.

Here is a good description of the polska as seen danced by a belated traveller who was on his way to Justedal's glaciers. "The track followed the river, winding up a deep narrow gorge between enormous rocky hills. Here and there was a stony plain, the débris of a glacier overgrown with trees; but distant views there were none. I had to walk hard to save daylight. At the end of twelve long miles by pedometer I found myself at a farm, and as I walked up I heard a fiddle. I thought that promised fun, so walked in and asked for quarters. I found four or five tall strapping young fellows, the best grown men I have seen in Norway, and a girl to match, sitting about a long table listening to the music. . . . It was dark outside, but a bright fire and a single candle lit up the wild unkept heads nodding to the music. I asked for old Norsk ditties, and got several. Presently a vast supper of porridge was produced, and the fiddle paused while I smoked my pipe.

"Supper over, the fiddle began again. Presently one of the young giants in leather breeches sprang on the floor, seized the giantess who made the porridge, and began a polska. He trotted round the room, holding her hand, while she toddled after him. Presently the girl was spun round and round like a teetotum, showing such powerful understanding that I marvelled; and then she was seized round the waist, and they both twirled together. Then they ambled about as before, then they had another fit of spinning till they were tired; and then another giant took the floor alone, and performed the halling

dance which no one has described so well as Björnson in his story entitled *Arne* as follows. The music began, deep silence prevailed, and Nils got ready for the dance. Airily he moved over the floor, marched in time with the music, his body half bent forward and reaching to right and left; now and then he crossed his legs, stood up straight again, assuming the attitude of a thrower, and then marched as at first, bent over. The fiddle was played with a sure hand, the melody became gradually faster and more fiery. Nils inclined his head more and more backwards, and all at once he hit the cross-plank of the ceiling with his foot, so hard that dust and whitewash fell on the spectators. Everybody laughed and shouted, and the girls stood as if they were breathless. Noisily the fiddler played on and on, with more and more fiery and challenging strains. Nils could not resist them; he bowed forward, jumped about in measure, stood up straight, assumed the attitude of a thrower, to fool them, then again crossed his legs under him, and suddenly, when it seemed as if he had no thought of jumping, he hit the plank of the ceiling a resounding blow with his foot, again and again, then threw somersaults in the air, forward and backward, standing straight as a candle on his feet after each. He had all he wanted. The fiddle played a few more bars in rapid time, laboured with tones that became lower and lower, until the dance music died out in a long-sustained bass note."

Our ship is thrashing her way westward against a strong breeze which sends the long rollers tumbling up the Skagevak. As we plunge through the foam the rocky coast slips ever by, like a mighty panorama slowly unrolling before our sight, the smoothly rounded rocks are broken now and then by chasms which stretch far into the heart of the sterile country. Detached rocks, some of

them marked with black or white beacons, stand far out among the waves. In the old days these winding waterways which pierce deep into the fastnesses of granite and slate were the homes of many a marauding Viking, and one can in fancy picture Sigmund pushing off in the dragon ship that Olaf Tryggvason gave him to win westward to the Faereys, and bring home the warlock Thrond.

"The sea waves turned like fire to see,
But Sigmund never a whit cared he.

Sigmund seaward his course will keep,
And the ship she was well-nigh sunk in the deep.

The waves they broke in the race so hard,
But Sigmund was not a whit afeard.

Sigmund up Swiney firth he stood,
The strakes they buckled like hoops of wood.

The strakes they buckled like hoops of wood,
The iron grew black as the black peat sod."

I have found that it is largely an unoccupied mind that brings on *mal-de-mer*, and not wishing to succumb at this juncture I dived into my cabin for my book of Sagas, and making myself comfortable on the sofa of the music room on deck I closed my mind on the turmoil without, and turned the page to my favourite Fornmanna Sögur, the Battle of Svold, and Olaf Tryggvason, the brave hero who in the story lost his life on his way home to Norway.

"Svein, King of Denmark, Olaf, King of Sweden, and Eirik Jarl lay under the island with all their host. The weather was fine and the sunshine was bright. All the chiefs went up on the island, and many of the host with them. When they saw that very many of the ships of

the Northmen sailed out to sea they were very glad, for their host grumbled at lying there so long, and some had lost all hope of the King of Norway's coming. Now they saw a large and splendid ship sailing, and both the Kings said: 'This is a large and exceedingly fine ship; it must be the *Long Serpent*.' Eirik Jarl answered: 'This is not the *Long Serpent*, which must look larger and grander, though this is a large and fine ship.' It was as the Jarl said, Styrkár of Gimsar owned the ship.

"Shortly after they saw another much larger ship, which had a head on its prow. King Svein said: 'This must be the *Long Serpent*; let us now go to our ships, and not be too slow in attack.' Eirik Jarl replied: 'This cannot be the *Long Serpent*, though it is finely fitted out.' It was as he said, for it belonged to Thorkel Nefja, King Olaf's brother; but he was not on board himself.

"And now they saw another large and fine ship. King Svein said: 'There you can see the King's ship.' The jarl replied: 'Certainly this is a large and splendid ship, but the *Serpent* must be much grander.' Close upon it came a fourth large ship. The two last were owned by two men of Vikin, Thorgeir, and Hyrning, the King's brothers-in-law; but they did not steer the ships, for they were in the *Long Serpent* with King Olaf.

"A little while after appeared a fifth, much larger than any of the preceding. King Svein said, laughing: 'Now is Olaf Tryggvason afraid, for he dares not sail with the head on his dragon.' Eirik Jarl replied: 'This is not the King's ship; this one I know well, as well as the sail which is striped: it belongs to Erling Skjalgsson, of Jadar; let them sail on, for I tell you truly that there

are warriors on board whom, if we go into battle with Olaf Tryggvason, it is better not to have, but to miss in his fleet, than to have it manned as it is, for I think Erling himself steers it.'

"It was not long after these five large ships and all the small ones of the fleet had sailed past them that they recognised Sigvaldi Jarl's ships, which turned in towards the island. They saw there three ships, and one of these was a large head ship (*i.e.* a ship having a head on the stem). Then said King Svein: 'Let us now go to the ships, for here comes the *Long Serpent*.' Eirik Jarl answered: 'Many large and splendid ships have they besides the *Long Serpent*, but few have yet sailed past; let us still wait.' Then many said: 'Now we may see that Eirik will not fight against Olaf Tryggvason, and dares not avenge his father; and this is such a great shame that it will spread over all lands, if we lie here with such a large host, and Norway's King sails with his handful of men past us and out to sea.'

"Eirik Jarl became very angry at their words, and asked all to go to the ships, saying: 'I expect, though the Danes and the Swedes now question my courage much, that both of them will be less at their ease before the sun goes down into the sea to-night than I and my men.' When they went down they saw four large ships sailing, one of which was a dragon ship much ornamented with gold. Many more said that the Jarl had spoken the truth. Here now sails the *Long Serpent*, and it is a very fine and large ship; no long ship is similar to it in beauty and size in the northern lands. It is not strange that the King is widely renowned, and is so great as to have such things made.

"King Svein arose and said: 'High shall the *Serpent* carry me to-night. Him will I steer.' Eirik Jarl added:

'Even if King Olaf Tryggvason had no larger ship than the one we just now saw, King Svein would never win it from him with the Dane host alone.' But these head ships they thought to be the *Long Serpent*,—the first was the *Tranan* (the *Crane*), and the second the *Armrinn Skammi* (the *Short Serpent*). The men crowded to the ships and pulled down the tents, and the chiefs arranged the host for attack, and it is said that they threw lots who should first attack Olaf's own ship, the *Long Serpent*.

"Svein, King of Denmark, drew the lot to attack first, and Olaf, King of Sweden, and Eirik Jarl last, if they needed it; and it was agreed between the chiefs, King Svein, King Olaf, and Eirik Jarl, that each should become owner of one-third of Norway if they slew King Olaf; while he who first got up on the *Serpent* should own all the booty there was on board, and each should own the ships which he himself captured and cleared of men.

"Eirik Jarl had a very large bardi which he used to have on Viking expeditions; there were beaks on the top of both stem and stern, and below there was a thick iron plate which covered the whole of the stem and stern all the way down to the water.

"When the chiefs had talked thus between themselves they saw three very large ships, and following them a fourth. They all saw a large dragon's head on the stern, ornamented so that it seemed made of pure gold, and it gleamed far and wide over the sea as the sun shone on it. As they looked at the ship they wondered greatly at its length, for the stern did not appear till long after they had seen the prow; then all knew and no one gainsaid that this was the *Long Serpent*. At this sight many a man grew silent, and fear and terror crept

into the breast of the host. This was not strange, for the great ship carried death for many men. Then said Eirik Jarl: 'This famous ship is befitting such a King as Olaf Tryggvason, for it is true of him that he excels other Kings as much as the *Long Serpent* does other ships.'

"When Sigvaldi Jarl had let down the sails on his ships and rowed up to the island, Thorkel Dydril on the *Tranan* and other ship-steerers who went with him saw that he turned his ship towards the islands; they lowered their sails and followed him. Thorkel shouted to Sigvaldi, asking why he did not sail. The jarl replied he would wait there for King Olaf. They let their ships float until Thorkel Nefja arrived with the *Short Serpent* and the four ships which followed him; they also lowered their sails, and let their ships float, waiting for the King. The fleet of the Kings lay inside the harbour, so that they could not see how large a host they had; but when King Olaf sailed towards the island and saw that his men had lowered their sails and waited for him, he steered towards them and asked why they did not go on. They told him that a host of foes was before them, and requested him to flee. The King stood on the lypting while he heard these tidings, and said to his men: 'Let down the sail as quickly as possible, and some of you put out the oars to take the speed off the ship. I will rather fight than flee, for never yet have I fled from battle; my life is in God's power, but never will I take to flight, for he is not a true King who in fear flies from his foes.'

"It was done as the King said, and the *Serpent* ran in front of the ships, and the men of the other ships brought them ahead by pulling with their oars. Then the entire host of the Kings towed up from under the

island; and the chiefs were very glad when they found that King Olaf had fallen into their ambush.

"When King Olaf Tryggvason and his men saw that the sea was covered far and wide with the war-ships of their foes, a wise and valiant man, Thorkel Dydril, his uncle, said: 'Lord, here is an overwhelming force to fight against; let us hoist our sails and follow our men out to sea. We can still do so while our foes prepare themselves for battle, for it is not looked upon as cowardice by any one for a man to use forethought for himself or his men.' King Olaf replied loudly: 'Tie together the ships, and let the men prepare for battle, and draw their swords, for my men shall not think of flight.'

"The chiefs arranged the host for attack, and it is said that they threw lots who should first attack Olaf's ship, the *Long Serpent*. Svein drew the lot to attack first, then Olaf and Eirik Jarl last, if it was needed.

"King Olaf signalled by horn to lay the eleven ships together which he had there. The *Long Serpent* was in the middle, with the *Short Serpent* on one side and the *Crane* on the other, and four other ships on each side of them. But the ship-host, though he had large ships, was only a small detachment compared to the overwhelming host which his enemies had. He now missed his host, as it was likely. King Olaf's men now tied together the ships as bid; but when he saw that they began to tie together the sterns of the *Long Serpent* and the *Short Serpent*, he called out loudly: 'Bring forward the large ship; I will not be the hindmost of all my men in this host when the battle begins."

"Then Ulf the Red, the King's standard-bearer and his stem-defender, said: 'If the *Serpent* shall be put as much forward as it is larger and longer than the other ships, the men in the bows will have a hard time of it.'

The King answered: 'I had the *Serpent* made longer than other ships, so that it should be put forward more boldly in battle, and be well known in fighting and sailing, but I did not know that I had a stem-defender who was both red and faint-headed.' Ulf replied: 'Turn, though, King, no more than back forward in defending the lypting than I will in defending the stem.' The King had a bow in his hand, and laid an arrow on the string and aimed at Ulf. Then Ulf said: 'Do not shoot me, lord, but rather where it is more needed, that is at our foes, for what I win I win for thee. May be you will think your men not over many before the evening comes.'

"The King took off the arrow, and did not shoot.

"Very fine King Olaf must have looked as he stood on the lypting of the *Serpent*, and rose high up; he had a gilt shield and a gilt helmet, and was recognisable from afar. He wore a short red silk kirtle over his coat of mail. When he saw that the hosts of his foes began to separate, and that the standards were raised in front of the chiefs, he asked: 'Who is chief of that standard which is opposite us?' He was told that it was King Svein with the Danish host. The King said: 'We are not afraid of those cowards, for no more courage is there in the Danes than in wood goats; never were Danes victorious over Northmen, and they will not conquer us to-day. But what chief follows the standards which are to the right?' He was told that it was Olaf the Swede, with the Svia host. The King added: 'Easier and pleasanter will the Swedes think it to sit at home and lick their sacrifice bowls than to board the *Long Serpent* to-day under your weapons, and I think we need not fear the horse-eating Swedes; but who owns those large ships to the left of the Danes?' 'It is,' they said, 'Eirik Jarl Hakonsson.' King Olaf replied: 'This host is full of

high-born men whom they have ranged against us; Eirik Jarl thinks he has just cause for fighting us. It is likely we shall have a hard struggle with him and his men, for they are Northmen like ourselves.'

"The Kings and the Jarl rowed at King Olaf. . . . The horns were blown, and both sides shouted a war-cry, and a hard battle commenced. Sigvaldi let his ships row to and fro, and did not take part in the battle. The battle raged fiercely, at first with arrows from cross-bows and hand-bows, and then with spears and javelins, and all say that King Olaf fought most manfully. . . . King Svein's men turned their stems as thickly as they could towards both sides of the *Long Serpent*, as it stood much farther forward than the other ships of King Olaf; the Danes also attacked the *Short Serpent* and the *Crane*, and the fight was of the sharpest and the carnage great. All the stem-defenders on the *Serpent* who could fought hand-to-hand, but King Olaf himself and those aft shot with bows and used short swords (handsox), and repeatedly killed and wounded the Danes.

"Though King Svein made the hardest onset on the Northmen with sixty ships, the Danish and Swedish hosts nevertheless were incessantly within shooting distance. King Olaf made the bravest defence with his men, but still they fell. King Olaf fought most boldly; he shot chiefly with bows and spears, but when the attack was made on the *Serpent* he went forward in hand-to-hand fight, and cleft many a man's skull with his sword.

"The attack proved difficult for the Danes, for the stem-defenders of the *Long Serpent* and on the *Short Serpent* and the *Crane* hooked anchors and grappling-hooks on to King Svein's ships, and as they could strike down upon the enemy with their weapons, for they had much larger and higher-boarded ships, they cleared of

men all the Danish ships which they had laid hold of. King Svein and all who could get away fled on board other ships, and thereupon they withdrew, tired and wounded, out of shooting distance. It happened as Olaf Tryggvason guessed, that the Danes did not gain a victory over the Northmen.

"It happened to the Swedes as to the Danes, that the Northmen held fast their ships with grappling-hooks and anchors, and cleared those they could reach. Their swords dealt one fate to all Swedes whom they reached with their blows. The Swedes became tired of keeping up the fight where Olaf with his picked champions went at them most fiercely. . . . Men say that the sharpest and bloodiest fight was that of the two namesakes before Olaf and the Swedes retreated. The Swedes had a heavy loss of men, and also lost their largest ships. Most of the warriors of Olaf, the Swedish King, were wounded, and he had won no fame by this, but was fain to escape alive. Now Olaf Tryggvason had made both the Danes and Swedes take to flight. It all went as he had said.

"Now must be told what Eirik Jarl did while the Kings fought against Norway's King. The Jarl first came alongside the farthest ship of King Olaf on one wing with the *Járnbardi*, cleared it, and cut it from the fastenings; he then boarded the next one, and fought there until it was cleared. The men then began to jump from the smaller ships on to the larger ones, but the Jarl cut away each ship from the fastenings as it was cleared. The Danes and Swedes drew up within shooting distance on all sides of King Olaf's ships, but Eirik Jarl lay continually side by side with one of them in hand-to-hand fight; and as the men fell on his ship other Danes and Swedes took their places. Then the

battle was both hard and sharp, and many of King Olaf's men fell.

"At last all Olaf's ships had been cleared except the *Long Serpent*, which carried all the men who were able to fight. Eirik Jarl then attacked the *Serpent* with five large ships. He laid the *Járnbardi* alongside the *Serpent*, and then ensued the fiercest fight and the most terrible hand-to-hand struggle that could be.

"Eirik Jarl was in the foreroom of his ship, where a shieldburgh was drawn up. There was both hand-to-hand fight and spear-throwing, and every kind of weapon was thrown, and whatever could be seized by the hand. Some shot with bows or with their hands, and such a shower of weapons was poured upon the *Serpent* that the men could hardly protect themselves against it. Then spears and arrows flew thickly, for on all sides of the *Serpent* lay war-ships. King Olaf's men now became so furious that they jumped upon the gunwales in order to reach their foes with their swords and kill them, but many did not lay their ships so close to the *Serpent* as to get into hand-to-hand fight; most of them thought it hard to deal with Olaf's champions. The Northmen thought of nothing but continually going forward to slay their foes, and many went straight overboard; for out of eagerness and daring they forgot that they were not fighting on dry ground, and many sank down with their weapons between the ships. . . .

"King Olaf Tryggvason stood on the lypting of the *Serpent*, and chiefly used during the day his bow and javelins; and always two javelins at a time. It was agreed by all, both friends and foes, who were present, and those who have heard these tidings told with the greatest truth, that they have known no man fight

more valiantly than King Olaf Tryggvason. King Olaf surpassed most other kings, in that he made himself so easily known in the battle that men knew no example of any king having shown himself so openly to his foes, especially as he had to fight against such an overwhelming force. The King showed the bravery of his mind, and the pride of his heart, so that all men might see that he shunned no danger. The better he was seen, and the greater lack of fear he showed in the battle, the greater fear and terror he inspired.

"King Olaf saw that his men on the forepart of the ship frequently raised their swords to strike, and that the swords cut badly. He cried out, 'Why do you raise your swords so slowly? I see they do not bite!' A man replied, 'Our swords are both dull and broken, lord.' The King then went down from the lypting into the foreroom and unlocked the high seat chest and took therefrom many bright and sharp swords, which he gave to his men. As he put down his right hand they saw that blood flowed out of the sleeve of the coat-of-mail, but no one knew where he was wounded.

"Hard and bloody was the defence of the foreroom men and the stem-defenders, for in both those places the gunwale was highest and the men picked. When the fall of men began on the *Serpent*, it was first amidships, mostly from wounds and exhaustion, and men say that if these brave men could have kept up their defence, the *Serpent* would never have been won. When only a few were left on the *Serpent* around the mast amidships, Eirik Jarl boarded it with fourteen men. Then came against him the King's brother-in-law, Hyrning, with his followers, and between them ensued a hard struggle, for Hyrning fought very boldly. It thus

ended that Eirik Jarl retreated on the *bardi*; but of those who had followed him, some fell, and some were wounded; and Hyrning and Eirik Jarl became much renowned from this fight. . . .

"Eirik Jarl took off the *bardi* the dead and wounded, and in their stead brought fresh and rested men, whom he selected from among Swedes and Danes. It is also said by some, that the Jarl had promised to let himself be baptized if he won the *Serpent*; and it is a proof of their statement that he threw away Thor and put up in its place a crucifix in the stem of the *bardi*.

"When he had prepared his men, he said to a wise and powerful chief who was present, Thorkel the High, brother of Sigvaldi Jarl: 'Often have I been in battles, and never have I before found men equally brave and so skilled in fighting as those on the *Serpent*, nor have I seen a ship so hard to win. Now, as thou art one of the wisest of men, give me the best advice thou knowest how the *Serpent* may be won.' Thorkel replied, 'I cannot give thee sure advice thereon, but I can say what seems to me best to do. Thou must take large timbers, and let them fall from thy ship upon the gunwale of the *Serpent*, so that it will lean over; you will then find it easier to board the *Serpent*, if its gunwale is no higher than those of the other ships. I can give thee no other advice, if this will not do.' The Jarl carried out what Thorkel had told him. . . .

"When Eirik Jarl was ready he attacked the *Serpent* a second time, and all the Danish and Swedish host again made an onset on King Olaf Tryggvason; the Swedes placed their prows close to the *Serpent*, but the greatest part of the host was within shooting distance of the Northmen, and shot at them incessantly. The Jarl again laid the *bardi* side by side with the

Serpent, and made a very sharp onslaught with fresh men; neither did he spare himself in the battle, nor those of his men who were left.

"King Olaf and his men defended themselves with the utmost bravery and manliness, so that there was little increase in the fall of men on the *Serpent* while they were fresh; they slew many of their foes, both on the *Járnbardi* and on other ships which lay near the *Serpent*. As the fight still went against Eirik Jarl, he hoisted large timbers on the *bardi*, which fell on the *Serpent*. It is believed that the *Serpent* would not have been won but for this, which had been advised by Thorkel the High. The *Serpent* began to lean over very much when the large timbers were dropped on her gunwale, and thereupon many fell on both sides. When the defenders of the *Serpent* began to thin, Eirik boarded it and met with a warm reception.

"When King Olaf's stem-defenders saw that the Jarl had got up on the *Serpent*, they went aft and turned against him, and made a very hard resistance; but then so many began to fall on the *Serpent*, that the gunwales were in many places deserted, and the Jarl's men boarded them; and all the men who were standing up for defence withdrew aft to where the King was. Haldór, a poet, says that the Jarl urged on his men.

"It is said that Thorstein Uscafót was in the fore-room aft by the lypting, and said to the King, when the Jarl's men came thickest on board the *Serpent*, 'Lord, each man must now do what he can!' 'Why not?' answered the King. Thorstein struck with his fist one of the Jarl's men who jumped up on the gunwale near him; he hit his cheek so hard that he dropped out into the sea, and at once perished. After

this Thorstein became so enraged that he took up the sail-yard and fought with it. When the King saw this, he said to Thorstein, 'Take thy weapons, man, and defend thyself with them; for weapons, and not hands alone or timber, are meant for men to fight with in battle.' Thorstein then took his sword, and fought valiantly.

"There was still a most fierce fight in the foreroom, and King Olaf shot from the lypting javelins or spears, both hard and often. When he saw that Eirik Jarl had come into the foreroom of the *Serpent*, he shot at him with three short-handled kesjas, or short spears, but they did not go as usual (for he never missed his aim when shooting), and none of these kesjas hit the Jarl. The first flew past his right side, the second his left, and the third flew on to the forepart of the ship above the Jarl's head. Then the King said, 'Never before did I thus miss a man; great is the Jarl's hamingja (luck); it must be God's will that he now shall rule in Norway, and that is not strange, for I think he has changed the *stem-dweller* on the *bardi*. I said to-day that he would not gain victory over us, if he had Thor in the stem.'

"As many of the Jarl's men had got up on board the *Serpent* as could be there, and his ships lay on all sides of it, and but few remained for defence against such a host. In a short time many of King Olaf's champions fell, though they were both strong and valiant. There fell both the King's brothers-in-law, Hyrning and Thorgeir, Vicar of Tiundaland, Ulf the Red, and many other brave men, who left a famous name behind.

"Kolbjörn Stallari, the marshal, had defended the stem during the day with the other stem-defenders; he had

weapons and clothing very much like King Olaf, and he had dressed so because he thought that if necessary, as it now was, he might save the life of the King. When the most valiant of the King's men in the foreroom began to fall, Kolbjörn went up on the lypting to the King. It was not easy to tell them apart, for Kolbjörn was a very large and handsome man. There was then such a thick shower of weapons in the lypting that the shields of King Olaf and Kolbjörn were covered all over with arrows. But when the Jarl's men came up to the lypting, it seemed to them that so much light came over the King that they could not see through it, yet when the light vanished they saw King Olaf nowhere."—*Olaf Tryggvason's Saga: Fornmanna Sögur*, ii.

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CHAPTER VII

BERGEN ON THE BY FJORD

BERGEN must be approached by water to be seen as it should be, and to be appreciated as one of the most beautiful little capitals in Europe. Norway, when all is said, is a country of mountains. It may have waterfalls, lakes, rivers, quaint boats, and quaint costume, but to all and each of these there is the mountain setting. In this case Bergen is the jewel set in its seven mountains. Prosaic Baedeker tries to make out that there are but four, but the citizens count seven, and the armorial bearings of the town contain seven hills, so this, I think, should be conclusive. The town should know best. Anyhow, the town was much exercised and anxious when we landed, every gaze was turned towards Ulriken, that lies to the north-east. Everyone possessed of a telescope, opera-glass, or binocular was the centre of a small crowd, all looking upwards at the mountain. We also looked, but could see nothing but a patch of snow or white-coloured stone. Where is it? and, What is it? was the question on each one's lips. Not till we arrived at the Hotel Métropole could we get our answer.

The stout porter spoke English fluently, and whilst looking through our glasses told us how two young ladies had climbed up the mountain the day before, and it was supposed had lost their way or had climbed a spot

BERGEN FROM THE PUDDEFJORD

too steep to climb down ; anyhow, there they were sitting under the rock. Of course, they would be English. No one else would do such a thing without a guide ; they had been out all night in the pouring rain. We both felt quite concerned, and, like everyone else, looked and looked again at the patch. Had anyone gone to their help? Yes, some firemen and soldiers had made a party, and were now climbing up to their rescue.

As nothing more could be done at the moment, we turned into the little park hard by to look at Stephen Sinding's Monument to Ole Bull. It seemed to me imposing in its simplicity. The rough-hewn rock that forms the pedestal, with a spring bubbling up through it, symbolised the master's love for the wild mountains, and the music of running water. His lithe body is well poised on the top, as with head erect he draws his bow across the strings of his loved violin. A pity it is that Sinding had not Pygmalion's power to make his statue live.

It makes one think what it can be in Bergen that generates great men. Can it be the constant rain, that keeps the brain soft and open to receive impressions? or is it the simple life led by the Norwegians? or the great solitudes that are so easily reached where one could think and dream for days and hours? Whatever it may be, the fact remains, that this small northern capital of 72,600 inhabitants is the birthplace of men who have shone like stars all over the world—in reform, literature, music, painting, and poetry.

Ole Bull stands pre-eminent, like in face to Liszt, but with a sharper, keener look, black brows over bright glad eyes full of life and hope, a firm mouth and dimpled chin ; a man who could do much and suffer much ; a man whom it would be easy to idolise, and a word

from whose mouth would set a soul bounding and revive depressed and flagging energy. Ole Bull is the idol of so great a master as Grieg. Mr. Finck tells us, in his most interesting life of Grieg, how as a boy "something like an electric current seemed to pass through the lad when the world-famed violinist shook his hand, though he could not understand his god smiling and joking just like an ordinary mortal."

Ole Bull was born in Bergen thirty-three years before Grieg. Luckily for him, his musical proclivities were discovered and appreciated by his master, the old rector of the Latin School, who said to him, "Take your fiddle in earnest, boy, and don't waste your time here." He followed this advice and became a violinist, concerning whom no less an authority than Joachim said: "No artist in our time has possessed his poetic fire." He went to Germany to study his violin with the famous Spohr, but found his style too academic to suit him. The capricious, fantastic Paganini was more to his taste, and him he chose for a model, if it can be said that he chose one at all. He soon won a fame and popularity hardly second to the great Italians, and became an indefatigable traveller, giving concerts in the cities of Scandinavia, Russia, Germany, France, Italy, and America.

As one can well imagine, his love for his violin was very great: on two or three occasions he nearly lost his life through it. The first time in Paris, where he tried to drown himself in the Seine on finding his treasure had been stolen; but he was rescued, and a wealthy lady gave him another Guarneri.

It was in a large measure due to a fit of pique on the part of Madame Malibran, that Ole Bull scored his first great success. It was from Bologna that his friends

at home first received the news of his triumphs, and here it was that he won the great celebrity that followed him ever afterwards. Sara Bull, his sister, tells us, that Madame Malibran had been engaged by the directors of the theatre for a series of nights; but she had made a condition which compelled them to give the use of the theatre without charge to De Beriot, with whom she was to appear in two concerts. The Marquis Lampieri, who was recognised as one of the greatest authorities in the musical world, persuaded these artists to appear at the same time. All was arranged and announced when, by chance, Malibran heard that De Beriot was to receive a smaller sum than had been stipulated for herself. Piqued at this she feigned illness, and De Beriot declared he was suffering from a sprained thumb.

Ole Bull had been a fortnight in Bologna, living in an upper room, in a poor hotel. Secluded from society, he spent the days in writing out his concerto; when evening came, the wonderful tones of his violin sounded from the open windows to the delight of the passers-by. One evening the celebrated Colbran Rossini's first wife was passing Casa Soldali and heard those strains. "It must be a violin," she said, "but a divine one, which will be a substitute for De Beriot and Malibran." And she went and told Lampieri on the night of the concert. Ole Bull, full of weariness, had retired to bed early, when he was roused by a rap at the door. It was Lampieri! He asked Ole Bull to improvise for him, and after listening for a while, cried, "Malibran may now have her headaches!"

He hurried Ole Bull to the theatre, where sat the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and De Beriot with his hand in a sling. Ole Bull was almost unnerved, but he

chose his own composition, and the desperation which compelled him to shut his eyes, made him play with an *abandon* and charm which at once captivated his audience. The final piece was to be a violin solo. The director was doubtful, but Ole Bull by this time was quite composed, and played so divinely that his hearers wept.

Perhaps the most memorable of his concert tours was that which he undertook in 1853 with the girl soprano, Adelina Patti. Reports of the wonderful art of this child had gone forth, and as one of the American critics remarked, "Nothing short of the testimony we have seen could make us believe such a thing possible. Yet the whole artistic life of Ole Bull is a guarantee that nothing but sterling merit can take part in his concerts."

Ole Bull's object in giving this particular series of concerts was to raise funds for carrying out a patriotic project of establishing a large Norwegian colony in Pennsylvania. "A new Norway," to cite his own words, "consecrated to liberty, baptized with independence, and protected by the Union's mighty flag." But he was too thoroughly an artist to be a good business man. After the forests had been cleared, and eight hundred settlers made their homes there, he found that he had been swindled; the title to the land he had paid for was fraudulent, and all that remained of his earnings was devoured by the resulting lawsuits. His disappointment was aggravated by the attitude of his countrymen when he returned to his home. He was unjustly accused of having speculated ruthlessly at the expense of those who had confided in him. He also had another cause for dissatisfaction with his neighbours.

In view of the fact that, up to that time, Norway had depended on Danish plays, Danish actors, and Danish

musicians, he, an ardent patriot, wanted to found a national theatre in Bergen—a Norse theatre with a Norse orchestra. Such a theatre was actually opened on January 2, 1850; but when he found, a year later, that he could no longer bear the cost, he asked the Storthing for a yearly appropriation. This was refused, and he was subsequently subjected to so many annoyances that after two years the theatre passed into other hands. In 1860, however, he resumed his direction of it, appointing Björnstjerne Björnson as dramatic instructor. Three years later he tried to found a Norse Music Academy in Christiania. "This academy," writes Jonas Lie, "was not founded; but the seed—the thought—was at that time planted. Since then it has grown and matured, and to-day we have a body of artists and composers, and quite another musical culture ready to receive it."

When Ole Bull died in 1880, his patriotic aspirations and services were duly acknowledged. The King sent a telegram of condolence to the widow, expressing his personal, as well as the national, loss, and Björnstjerne Björnson said, in an address delivered before thousands of mourners: "Patriotism was the creative power in his life. When he established the Norse theatre, assisted Norse art, and helped the National Museum, his mighty instrument singing for other patriotic ends; when he helped his countrymen and others wherever he found them, it was not so much for the object, or the person, but for the honour of Norway."

Grieg played the organ at the funeral services, and his remarks, which followed Björnson's, must also be cited. "Because more than any other thou wast the glory of our land; because more than any other thou hast carried our people with thee up towards the bright heights of Art; because thou wast more than any other a pioneer of

our young national music; more, much more, than any other, the faithful, warm-hearted conqueror of all hearts, because thou hast planted a seed which shall spring up in the future, and for which coming generations shall bless thee, with the gratitude of thousands upon thousands for all this, in the name of our Norse memorial art, I lay this laurel wreath on thy coffin. Peace be with thy ashes!"

In the museum, on a glass-covered table, lies a beautiful gold laurel wreath with berries of the purest pearls; alongside rests the violin the great master so loved. The strings are broken, dust is the hand that won from it all that it could give, but the music lives, and will live for aye.

Follow the road back from the museum, downhill till you reach the Hotel Métropole. Walk along the road that faces it, past small houses on your left, and big grey lodging-houses on your right. On your left you will see the walls and trees of the graveyard, the rest is easy. Pass through the little iron gate and you find yourself in God's acre, so still, so green, so damp. The smell of box pervades the air, and the music of a noisy little bubbling stream is the only sound. Each nation has its own style of graves, and here they are mostly covered with cast-iron boxes, with sides some 18 inches high. They are not pretty to look at, the rust creeps through, and all are overshadowed by the weeping ash. Towards the middle the ground is more open, and the family graves are small gardens neatly kept, and evidently tended by loving hands. The small rake and water-pot testify to the care lavished upon them, and there is a seat whereon the worker may rest or read. The headstone is a scroll lifted on a marble cushion. In the centre, where four water-worn paths meet, rises the

small ivy-covered mound that enshrines the remains of the great master, and on the great urn that surmounts the whole, the two words "Ole Bull."

Till I passed the quarters by the cemetery I had thought that Bergen had no poor, but this idea was put to flight on passing the great grey blocks of tenements. Broken windows, and dirty babies played in the dust, and the ever-familiar figure predominated of a little girl carrying a baby nearly as big as herself. At the fish-market, too, poverty was apparent. Pale-faced children, shoeless, hatless, and ragged, waited to grab and quarrel over any small fish or morsel that might fall perchance on the paving-stones.

To lean for a while on the railings, that are placed along the Vaagen Quay, where the boats all come in with their loads of fish, is most interesting. It is one of the shows of the town, more especially on market-days, which are Wednesday and Saturday. The smaller boats lie side by side, as many as can possibly squeeze together, bow on to the wall, the larger fishing-boats lying tier upon tier along the quays. Men, women, and children, with every kind of bag, basket, tin-pot, newspaper, and nets, haggle and barter for the fish. They stand on the steps that lead down to the water, and along the railings. It is a good spot to study human nature in all its varieties. From the lady who leaves her carriage to do her own marketing, to the miserably poor woman who looks long and carefully at the small fish held up to her in the wooden shovel, the small coin she is about to part with held tightly in her hand. The fish was cheap, and the variety that the boats contained very surprising.

In the market square the tables were laid out with some of the larger kinds of fish, of which only a portion

could be sold at a time. Alongside each one was a big tub, with the far-famed klip fish, and round fish, soaking in water, looking plump and full, a wonderful contrast to the dried husks stacked like hay in the boats. The country folk had all driven in with farm produce, and now, before returning home, came down to the quay. Their carts were left with the horse in the shafts, one hoof securely fastened to the wheel. Some of the milk-tins were brought down, the last drain of milk turned out, and the tin (most reprehensible habit I thought) filled with fish. But as in Norway the cows in some places are fed on fish, the flavour in the milk might pass unnoticed by the consumer.

The women who came to do the bargaining were ugly, and the mere fact of haggling made them uglier still. We never saw such a crowd; they surged and pushed, hands were thrust through the bars to receive the fish, and the fishermen held up their fish-scoops for the money, handing back change in the same way. Every time the fisherman handled his fish he washed his hands and scoop; most of their hands were painful to look upon, swollen and white.

Opposite the Tydskebryggen or German Quay, which faces the old wooden "gaards" or houses in which the clerks of the Hanseatic League lived, stand great square wooden tanks on a jetty. These are kept filled with salt water for the live fish. This jetty on market-days is neither savoury nor clean. The fishermen stand behind the tanks in complete suits of yellow oil-skins and sea-boots. Most of them are fair, flaxen, or red-headed. Standing as they do, with the mast spars and cordage of their square-rigged ships as a background, they remind one more of the Vikings than any picture, saga, or tale that I have ever seen or heard. Place a pair

TYDSKEBRYGGEN, BERGEN

of wings on the fisherman's sou'wester, and he might be Eric the red, Harald blue tooth, or Olaf Tryggvason himself.

Personally, I would much rather buy my fish dead, but the good wives of Bergen think otherwise. They pass from tank to tank, watching the fish swim, and point to the one that takes their fancy. In goes the fisherman's spoon-shaped net, and in a moment the fish lies flapping and splashing the water in a floating wooden tray. If approved, sudden death overtakes it; a knife-slit at the back of the head, a slit across the neck, then a piece off the tail, and the fish is placed in the basket or pail in a very much quicker time than it takes to write. Should the fish not be approved, the Viking sends it back into the tank with a splash, that covers the bystanders with water, and turns on his heel. The men were splendid, but having seen the tanks and their occupants once, I should never care to see them again.

The pier on which we stand is but a stone's throw from the fine open quay, with its long row of old timber houses that once belonged to the all-powerful Hanseatic League. The older houses still retain the signs of their bygone owners, such as a cod-fish crowned, the three-faced king, with four eyes and but three noses, a quaint carved unicorn, the head of Medusa, and a man's head with a fur cap, that might have come from Nishni Novgorod. Each front is a gable covered with lovely coloured dull red tiles from above, and when approaching the town from the fjord, it is these fine red roofs clustered together on the peninsula, and along the water-edge of the Vaagen, that give the touch of warmth and colour so valuable to this town which is more or less in tears the whole year through. Unfortunately, the inhabitants do not

recognise the value of the red roofs. The newer buildings are being covered with cold-coloured slates, and the walls stuccoed. Soon these old wooden "gaards," in which the merchants of Bremen and Lübeck lived and kept their stores of dried fish, will be demolished.

One alone, known as Finnegaarden, the one nearest to the market, has been kept as a museum by the energy and generosity of Mr. I. W. Olsen. He not only gave the houses, but collected all the curious old objects of the period, with which it is furnished. The coat-of-arms of the League was the half-eagle and the crowned cod-fish, with a larger crown covering both. This hangs on the walls close to the fire-boxes with flint and steel. A beautiful brass kettle suspended over a big brass basin, in which the manager was wont to wash, stands in the room. Tankards and plates, weights for selling and buying, testify to this day to the unfair dealing between the League and its victims. Light weights for buying, heavy weights for selling, the farce played out to the end. Each great ledger begins "In the name of Jesu, Amen," followed by the Christian names of the fishermen—

Jepsab
Jermisen
Joseph
Jurgen . . .

who, poor souls, were ever kept in debt by the manager, who bought their fish cheap, and with leaded weights in exchange for goods, sold at full value and short measure. The League's belief in its manager's honesty is also exemplified by the money-box. This has three different keys, which necessitated the presence of the three managers before it could be opened.

A lamp held me fascinated for some time by its

ingenuity. Imagine three black iron developing dishes of different sizes suspended one above the other, with a square black piece of iron at the top to prevent the smoke from blackening the rafters. A wick was placed in a lip at each corner of the dishes, and fed with cod-liver oil. The whole when hanging had the appearance of a Chinese pagoda with twelve lights. Fine old carved chairs upholstered in painted leather, and a quaint table with heavy ball and pillar legs, help to furnish an oak-panelled room. In this room is the merchant's office, enclosed in glass windows, where like a spider he sat awaiting his prey.

Each "gaard" was presided over by a "Bygherre," and was divided into "staver" or offices, belonging to different owners, each owner having a clerk and one or more servants. On the ground-floor were the warehouses, each with its little sliding shutter close to the ground for the ingress and egress of the cat that caught the rats. On the first floor is the outer room leading to the manager's office, with his dining-room and bedroom behind. On the second floor are the rooms for the clerks and servants. Strict rules, precautions, and fines were made to prevent the Germans from intermarrying with the Norwegians. No maid was allowed to enter the men's room on pain of death, but this was seldom if ever enforced, a fine sufficing. In an old print hanging in one of the rooms, this German quay is shown surrounded by walls with a gate at either end. These gates were kept locked at night by the authorities of Bergen, as the two thousand Germans in residence were considered a distinct menace to the town. The guns, too, of the Rosenkrantz Tower were kept trained so as to enfilade the Tydskebryggen.

Mr. Richard Lodge tells us that the Hanseatic League took its name from the word "Hansa," which

at first signified a troop, or military muster. From this came the general sense of union, and, in the Middle Ages, a union for mercantile purposes. Later, the word came to have another meaning, that of a tax, paid by traders for the right of forming such a union.

Germans were always great at business, and in very old days the traders of some of the northern towns—Cologne, Dortmund, Bremen, and Hamburg—joined together in a guild. They had mercantile settlements in Wisby, London, Novgorod, Bergen, and Bruges. Even so far back as the reign of Saxon Edgar, we find the Germans prominent in London trade and joining in a league. In 1260 a charter of Henry III. gave protection to all German merchants. Lübeck joined Hamburg in the Hansa Alumanniæ, which soon after rose to great importance, and gradually from a league of merchants abroad became a union of towns at home. In 1330 mention is first made of a Hanse Town; and in 1343 Magnus of Norway designated the League as the Hansa, thus giving it a diplomatic position. Denmark was always more or less opposed to German interest. In 1361, Waldemar III. captured Wisby, and the Hansa in the following year took Copenhagen, for the allied towns were quite able to make war on their own account. Denmark fell entirely into the hands of the League, and it was stipulated that henceforth no king should reign in the country without the consent of the Hanse towns. Now they appear to have reached the zenith of their power.

Aristocratic in character, the yearly assemblies busied themselves with all the details of foreign policy. But there were many dissensions, for the towns lay scattered over a large territory extending from Russia to the low countries, and their interests often clashed. During

the fifteenth century there was plenty of fighting, and the Hansa held its own.

However, English and Dutch now began to rival the trade of the League. The herrings made a change, too, in their habits, and came now to the coasts of Holland, instead of the fjords of Norway, where the merchants of Germany had for long held a practical monopoly of the fisheries. Then the discoverers of the New World, and the road to India by the Cape, came, and the League began to decline, for the Hanse towns were far away from the trade routes. Gradually the more distant towns began to fall away. The Reformation only strengthened the hands of the lay princes, and in the reign of Elizabeth the privileges which had been granted in London to the Hanse merchants from the time of Henry III. were taken from them. The Thirty Years' War gave yet another stroke at the power of the League, and in 1669 the last general assembly was held. The trade with Norway in salt cod still went on for nearly one hundred years, but in 1764 their last store or office was sold to a Norseman. From these comptoir the German merchants got the name of "Kontorske." They had forcibly excluded the traders of all other nations; even the Norwegians themselves were not allowed to participate until the time of Christopher Valkendorf, who opposed their oppressive sway.

The nearest corner of the haven seemed to be the wood market. The townspeople came down with carts and hand-barrows and bargained for as much firewood as they could load. Two upright posts painted with divisions stood on the quay, and between these the short lengths of birch and fir were built up to make a sort of wall; the price of the firewood depending on the height of the division on the posts. There was

no middleman, and during the slack times, when customers were few and far between, the crews loafed and spat.

The craft were wonderfully primitive, clinker-built of soft wood, and of about sixty tons, each had but one tall tapering mast, stepped right amidships, generally scarfed and fished one-third up. The rigging was of hemp, set up with wooden dead eyes, and worn lanyards. There was a forlorn look about the great square sail, as though it might be conscious of being hopelessly out of date. There were no reef points, for nearly half the area of the sail was made up of narrow bonnets laced together one under the other, so that in strong winds it was only necessary to unlace one or more bonnets to be under snug canvas at once—a survival this from the Middle Ages. The strange old craft had bluff, flaring bows, with stems standing some 7 or 8 feet above the gunwale, like those of the Maltese Dysos. The great square transoms had windows similar to the gun-room ports of an old three-decker, and all round the poops soft wood timberheads stood up. The only new-fangled object on board was the winch, for hoisting the great square sail. This was right aft, close to the helmsman, and when the yard was mastheaded the whole of the greasy wire whip was wound up on the barrel of the winch just like black cotton on a bobbin, and when the pawls were lifted, and the band-brake eased, the likeness to the cotton reel was still more marked; and aloft there were Irish pennants in profusion.

An affable stranger seeing our interest in the timber jagter began to explain their characteristics. "These ships very national. Very old: ever since the time of ancient Vikings. Very good with wind behind; but

with head-wind no good. How many? Three men dey work em from the Nordfjord, sometimes three days, sometimes three weeks. No hurry? yes, but dey want to get home to cut hay, these men farmers. No; dey never carry cod-fish, always timber. Fine trees up dare, quite as good as American pitch pine. Steamers? No; but some has petrol engines."

I once watched one of these beating to windward; and as the skipper put his helm hard down, the sail falling aback, not only stopped the old craft dead, but pushed her back stern first, and the helm had to be reversed before she would fall off. At last, when nearly round on the other tack, the crew swung the yard, but just at that moment the wind unfortunately came round too, and away went the poor old ship stern first, and again the yard had to be braced on the old tack. Fancy beating up a narrow channel with fluky winds striking off from the lofty cliffs, in an antiquated old packet, rigged for all the world like the galley of Ulysses or the ships that brought Solomon his gold from Tarshish. Straightway we are carried back two hundred and fifty years into the reign of the merry monarch, and of King Frederick III.—the days of the Hanseatic League, with all its oppressive monopolies and extortions.

The jagter piled high with their great stacks of dried stock-fish, and the wooden, barn-like storehouses where the evil-smelling cargoes are piled, are but modern representations of the great trade which has gone on steadily and, as far as outward appearance is concerned, without change for almost a thousand years. For the greater part of this long time the German merchants kept everything in their own hands.

Very interesting was a drawing of Van de Velde's

that we came across in the museum, depicting a battle that was fought in 1665, when the English fleet tried to capture the Dutch fleet that had taken refuge in the harbour. If one may judge from Van de Velde's drawing of the battle, the English must have got quite as much as they bargained for. The Dutch, both Indiamen and men-o'-war, are represented moored stem to stem in a line which stretches right across the mouth of the haven, so that all their broadsides bear on the British fleet. These are shown in the forefront of the picture, anchored in more or less confusion, with their topsail-yards on the caps, heading all ways at once. A heavy fire is being kept up, not only by the Hollanders, but by the Rosenkrantz Tower, which flies the Danish flag, and, indeed, the whole front of the fortress of Bergenhus is bristling with cannon, all trained upon the intruding English. The round shot our fleet fired back are still to be seen in the castle walls, gilded, to make them the more conspicuous.

Besides the Van de Velde drawing, there is an English print of the same period. Here we have a bird's-eye view of old Bergen, and the two fleets are shown closely engaged.

If one walks down to the end of the jetty to the west of Faestningsbrygge, and looks up the Vaagen towards the red-roofed town, one can in fancy picture the old sea-fight. The castle walls still stand just as they did in the time of Van de Velde. The rig of the jagter has not altered in any way. We have but to shut out one or two of the ugly new houses, and try to believe that the clouds of steam which rise from countless steam-winches all along the busy quay is smoke from the guns, which still grin from the batteries under the Tower of Rosenkrantz. Just at

this moment the cannon really begin to fire, for this is the birthday of the little Prince Olaf. As the great cloud of vapour rolls over us, we catch the unmistakable savour of villainous saltpetre; and whilst the Royal salute lasts, one has but to twist the forms of the tramp steamers, so that lofty poops rise, all carved and gilded, and the derricks are changed to lateen mizzens and spritsail masts.

Samuel Pepys, in 1665, the year of the plague, relates in his Diary: "How my lord, having commanded Teddiman, with twenty-two ships, of which but fifteen could get thither, and of those fifteen but eight or nine could come up to play, to go to Bergen; where, after several messages to and from the governor of the castle urging that Teddiman ought not to come thither with more than five ships, and desiring time to think of it, all the while he suffering the Dutch ships to land their guns to the best advantage, Teddiman, on the second pretence, began to play on the Dutch ships, whereof ten East Indiamen, and in three hours' time, the town and castle without any provocation, playing on our ships, they did cut all our cables, so the wind being off the land did force us to go out and rendered our few ships useless, without doing anything, but what hurt, of course, our guns must have done them: we having lost five commanders, besides Mr. Edward Montague and Mr. Windham. Our fleet is come home, to our great grief, with not above five weeks' dry and six days' wet provisions."

A little farther on we come to an interview with Lord Sandwich himself, newly up, and still in his night-dress. "He did inform us, in the business of Bergen, so as to let us see how the judgment of the world is not to be depended on in things they know not; it

being a place just wide enough and so much hardly, for ships to go through to it, the yard-arms sticking in the very rocks. He do not upon his best enquiry, find reason to except against any part of the business by Teddiman; he having staid treating no longer than during the night while he was fitting himself to fight, bringing his ship abreast and not a quarter of an hour longer, as it is said; nor could more ships have been brought to play, as it is thought. Nor could men be landed, there being 10,000 men effectively always in arms of the Danes; nor, says he, could we expect more from the Danes than he did, it being impossible to set fire on the ships but it must burn the towne. But that whereon the Dane did amisse is that he did assist them, the Dutch all the time, while he was treating with us when he should have been neutrall to us both. But, however, he did demand but the treaty of us; which is that we should not come with more than five ships."

In front of the Exchange stands the statue of Ludvig Holberg, in periwig and full-skirted coat—another great man that first saw the light in Bergen. According to Mr. E. W. Gosse, no author who ever lived has had so vast an influence as Holberg had over his Scandinavian countrymen, an influence that is still at work after two hundred years. He it was who founded Danish literature, and who, with the exception of Voltaire, was the first writer in Europe during his own generation. He found Denmark unprovided with books, and wrote a library for her. Holberg filled the shelves of the citizens with works in their own tongue, on history, law, politics, science, philology, and philosophy. He stands another instance of a man fighting his way to the top of his profession, through bitter privations, illness, and starva-

tion. He earned what money he could by teaching, and for some time was a poor tutor in the house of a rural dean at Voss. Later, after taking his degree, he was again obliged to earn his living teaching in the house of Dr. Smidt, vice-bishop of Bergen, who had travelled much. The reading of Dr. Smidt's note-books awakened such a longing to travel in young Holberg, that at last, in 1706, having scraped together sixty dollars, he started, and during the next few years visited a great portion of Europe, chiefly on foot.

He travelled through London to Oxford, where he studied for two years, gaining his livelihood by giving lessons on the violin and flute. It was here that it first occurred to him "how splendid and glorious a thing it would be to take a place among the authors." It was not till 1718 that his talents were recognised by his appointment as Professor of Metaphysics at the University of Copenhagen. In 1720 he was promoted to the lucrative chair of public eloquence, which gave him a seat in the Consistory, and brought his pecuniary troubles to an end.

Holberg distinctly marks an epoch. He overthrew the trivialities of the German stage, which he satirised without mercy. He set an example, never surpassed, of a series of comedies, taking his types from popular life, and ridiculing with healthy directness those vices and follies which were the theme of the comic drama of the time. The marvellous rapidity with which he wrote can be judged by the record of the plays written by him between the years 1722 and 1724 at the time that he took up the direction of the first Danish theatre built in Copenhagen.

In 1747 he was made Baron of Holberg, and lived

on for seven years longer, dying at the age of seventy, and was buried at Sorö. Holberg's published works are legion. But the best edition of his comedies is considered to be the one brought out in three volumes by F. L. Lichtenberg in 1870.

CHAPTER VIII

BERGEN—GRIEG—MUSIC

BERGEN had shown us what it really could do in the way of rain. All day long it had poured steadily, and as evening drew on, it still rained. A pale yellow river flowed in the gutters and down the roads, in the middle of which it left deep furrows. Every two or three hours a train would disgorge its passengers, men and women, who emerged from the station in a long straggling line, with dripping umbrellas of all sorts and sizes, walked to the corner of the road, where all dispersed each on his own business. Then silence followed, with nothing to break it but the dripping of the trees. There was no night, the daylight simply got greyer and more drear for a while, and then about 11 p.m. grew lighter. A yellow band appeared, which gradually spread, suffusing the whole sky. The new day was born, not a weeping day like the one just past, but a day of glorious sunshine, that made the many roofs shine like burnished gold. The train left at seven, passing through the pleasant suburbs: the summer residences of the better classes. The houses were painted white, picked out with green, pink, or yellow; nice enough to live in no doubt, but with no pretensions to architectural beauty. On we went past gardens, green fields, and patches of oats swaying in the warm breezes; along past small lakes, till the head of the Nordaasvand opened out, allowing a fleeting glance of

beautiful little islands, pleasant villas, and wooded slopes beyond.

We left the train at Hop (pronounced Hope) and wended our way up a dewy lane with high banks on either side, the brown earth still moist from the recent rain. Walking slowly before us, and every now and then stopping, and leaning on his stick, to drink in the fresh beautiful air, was the slight delicate figure of Norway's great composer, Grieg, a figure impossible to mistake. He was dressed in grey, his white hair hanging beneath a soft felt hat, that he continually raised, to greet the many respectful bows of the passing peasants. Over his arm hung a small grey shawl, and alongside him walked a sturdy maid. As we passed, his glance rested on us a moment, as though trying to recognise a friend. Diffidence, however, stepped in, and we went on our way, till we reached a point with a lovely view high above the shimmering vand.

Edvard Grieg has certainly chosen a beautiful spot to rest after the heat and turmoil of the day. No sound but Nature's own music breaks the peaceful stillness. Gently the little wavelets gurgle, as they turn the pebbles on the shore. The rustling of the leaves in the light wind sing a summer song of their own. The hay lies warm and sweet drying in the sun. Close round us is the sharp chirp of the grasshoppers. In the far distance the high-pitched voices of children playing in the warm shallows of the lake are borne upwards on the breeze, and farther still a dog's bark.

The lake stretches away into the distance, an inland arm of the Nordaasvand. All round the banks slope gently, thickly wooded, with birch and mountain ash to the water's edge. Bracken clothes the rocky part of the slopes, and crossing and recrossing the fields are the long

THE HOUSE OF EDVARD GRIEG AND THE NORDAASVAND

fences hung with the drying hay. The farmer, his wife in her pretty red bodice and big white cap, their son and daughter, are all as busy as bees. The farmer is mowing the tall flower-spangled grass, his wife and daughter are lifting and hanging the hurdles full, while the son is carting home the dry hay.

One long arm of rock stretches away from under the knoll, on the top of which stands the great master's house, in some views looking like a causeway of rock jutting towards the farther shore; but in others detaching itself into small green islands. The knoll is thickly clothed with trees, in which the house stands, half hidden, and from the lookout on the top waves the fine new, free flag of Norway.

The sketch was finished, and about to be placed in its case, when we were made aware that strangers were approaching by the barking of a little dog, who had divided his attentions between us and the farmer, his master. In the two figures walking slowly up the hill, one was at once recognisable as Edvard Grieg. As he came nearer, he put out his hand, and said, "May we be allowed to see? I and my friend, Mr. Beyer (who allow me to present to you as my very dear friend and constant companion), were taking our evening stroll and perceived you at work."

The drawing was duly admired, and must be shown Madame Grieg, so, closing the paint boxes, the two masters walked ahead, whilst Mr. Beyer and I followed. Mr. Beyer was most interesting and kind. He told me that for over twenty years the great master had been his best friend. Mr. Beyer had helped him to collect his folk-songs, and how one day as he was walking along he came upon a girl milking a cow and singing a song he had never heard. "I out with my pencil and a bit of

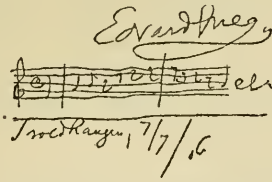
paper, and said to the girl, 'Sing on! sing on!' Whilst she sang I wrote the notes of music on the cow's back."

Noticing the frail look and bent back of the master, I asked, "Is Mr. Grieg very delicate?" "Oh! not so much as he looks. He is not a strong man, but he is careful. Oh dear! he should have his shawl on. See, talking to your husband he has forgotten himself," and he ran ahead, and drawing the shawl from the master's arm wrapped it round him. We had reached the pretty garden full of flowers, Mr. Grieg opened the gate, and, as he did so, said, "Welcome to Troldhaugen," and escorted us to the house, whilst Mr. Beyer went to find Mrs. Grieg.

The room into which we were ushered was cosy, and full of sun and colour. On the walls were various large and small laurel wreaths hid with the gay colours belonging to the nations whose hearts had been touched by the master's sweet music. In one corner stood a splendid bust of Björnson, with a great wreath hung round the neck, and on the other side of the room the master's piano. I longed to open it, and say "Play," but did not dare presume. So we chatted, and Frau Grieg came in, all charm and bustle, looking like a ray of sunlight let loose. She admired the sketch, and showed us her pictures, and insisted on tea, which was served in dainty blue cups. Just about to show us her garden, she was called aside. Coming back, Frau Grieg begged us to excuse her, as the doctor had arrived, to see her aged mother, who, poor lady, had had a heavy fall.

Mr. Grieg said, "Come, let me show you my view," and he and Mr. Beyer led us through the garden to a small mound up which ran a narrow path. From the top one looked down on the beautiful vand. Grieg stood quiet for a moment gazing on the lovely panorama, a far-away look in his kind blue eyes. Turning suddenly, he said,

"What can I do for you? I should like to do something." I passed him my little book. "Shall I write my name?" "Please do." "Anything else? Poetry, music, eh!" I said, "Just a bar, please." To my delight, he wrote a bar of the piece I so love, and passed it back.



We took hands, and said nice things while strolling back to the gate.

One thing we had much wished had come to pass. We had seen and spoken with Mr. and Mrs. Grieg. Mr. Beyer overtook us on our way to the station, and again shook hands, saying over and over, "So delighted to see you." He told us how on one occasion he was in a boat with Grieg on the lake. Grieg sitting still, his head full of inspirations, began to scribble on pieces of paper, which, as he filled, he laid on the seat beside him. A little puff of wind took one of the papers to Mr. Beyer, who was sitting on the thwart behind. He picked it up and softly whistled the tune, which made Grieg look round with a jump. "Where did you hear that?" "Oh," said Mr. Beyer, "only a little tune that has just entered my head," which set Grieg marvelling, that such an interchange of thought could take place.

It is nice for us to know, that though Bergen lays claim to this great master, we, in our turn, can claim him as belonging in the first place to us. "Are you Scotch?" was one of his questions. "So am I." It was in the troublous times after the Battle of Culloden, when everything seemed lost, that many Scotchmen left their

country, and amongst them was a merchant named Alexander Greig of Aberdeen, who emigrated to Norway, where the climate (a wee bit saft) and general surroundings sufficiently resembled his beloved home. He established himself at Bergen, and changed his name to Grieg, so that the pronunciation should sound the same in Norwegian. Grieg said that the names of General Greigh and Elphinstone had been impressed on him when his father told him that his family arms, which bore a ship, denoted that his ancestor was in all probability the Scotch Admiral Greigh.

"To the question, Who is the most original and poetic of living composers? there can to-day be but one answer: Edvard Grieg." "Grieg is recognised far beyond his native country as one of the few masters who have enriched music with new means of melody and harmonic expression, and created a national art distinguished by poetic feeling and the charm of many moods. He has brought it about that Norwegian moods, and Norwegian life, have entered into every music-room of the whole world;" and "The north is most assuredly entitled to a language of its own." These are the opinions of La Mara, Georg Capellen, Björnson, and Robert Schumann.

Grieg's great talent was inherited from his mother, Gesine Judith Hagerup, who devoted much of her time to music. Her skill was so great that she was able to appear as soloist at concerts in Bergen. Grieg always remembers the remarkable nerve and rhythmic animation with which she played the works of her favourite, Weber. His mother began to teach him when he was only six years old, and succeeded beyond her fondest hopes. "Not that it was all easy sailing at first. I had to practise just what was unpleasant. . . . There was no trifling with her if I spent the time in dreaming at the piano

instead of busying myself with the lesson set. . . . My unpardonable tendency to dreaming was already beginning to bring me the same difficulties which have accompanied me long enough throughout my life. Had I not inherited my mother's irrepressible energy, as well as her musical capacity, I should never in any respect have succeeded in passing from dreams to deeds."

Ole Bull it was that discovered the great gift that lay in the lad. To quote Grieg's own words: "When he heard I had composed music I had to go to the piano; all my entreaties were in vain. I cannot now understand what Ole Bull could find at that time in my juvenile pieces. But he was quite serious, and talked quietly to my parents. The matter of their discussion was by no means disagreeable to me. For suddenly Ole Bull came to me, shook me in his own way, and said: 'You are to go to Leipzig, and become a musician!' Everybody looked at me affectionately, and I understood just one thing—that a good fairy was stroking my cheeks, and that I was happy."

At the Conservatory his first teacher was the renowned Plaidy, followed by E. F. Wenzel, the gifted friend of Schumann, and the famous Ignaz Moscheles. There were other foreigners at the Conservatory at the same time as Grieg, five of whom subsequently became leaders in the musical world of London. Among these were Sir Arthur Sullivan, Franklin Taylor, Walter Bache, Edward Dannreuther, and lastly the fine musician John Francis Barnett. These English boys progressed more quickly than Grieg at the time. Grieg suddenly realised this, and saw that he would have to submit to the drudgery as they did, and he went from one extreme to the other. He worked day and night, with the result that he collapsed in the spring of 1860 with lung trouble, which

impaired his health for life. Later he returned to the Conservatory, and in the spring of 1860 passed his examinations with credit. Grieg writes—

"I played some pianoforte pieces of my own; they were lame productions enough, and I still blush to-day that they appeared in print as Opus I.; but it is a fact that I had an immense success, and was called for several times." So his career began. The famous Niels W. Gade did much to encourage him. Grieg had arrived at the age of twenty, and was asked by Gade if he had anything of his own composition to show. His answer was that he had nothing of importance. "Very well, then," retorted Gade, "go home and write a symphony." A fortnight later he had composed and orchestrated the first movement of a symphony, with which Gade was much pleased, and spoke words of encouragement that fired the young man's ambition.

It was at Valestrand, in the beginning of 1864, that Grieg formed an intimate friendship with the great violinist Ole Bull. They made excursions together into their favourite mountain regions, where Ole Bull as a child had fancied he heard nature sing and the blue-bells ring. The consequences were inevitable. Ole Bull, whose motto was, "My calling is Norse music," was pleased to have so sympathetic and talented a young companion. To hear such a man play, to play with him, to accompany him to the homes of the peasants and hear their music, this was the privilege of Edward Grieg at twenty-one. Then, too, flourished Richard Nordraak, a young Norwegian composer of rare talent, who might have done as much as Grieg himself had not death carried him off at the age of twenty-four. Even in this short span of life he created some notable works, among them pianoforte pieces, setting of his cousin Björnson's *Mary Stuart in Scotland*,

Siguard Slembe and the patriotic song "Ja vi elsker." Like Ole Bull, he was patriot to the verge of fanaticism. By him Grieg, who loved his fatherland above everything, had his feelings fanned to a bright flame. Up to this point Grieg had felt the Leipzig shackles, and was somewhat timid; but Nordraak's courage and enthusiasm proved contagious. He now dared to be himself, and Norse. He wrote his four "Humeresken," Opus 6, dedicated them to Nordraak, and the die was cast.

"Jeg elsker dig" (I love thee) is one of the most impassioned and popular of love songs. The date of its composition is 1864. In that year Grieg became engaged to his cousin, Miss Nina Hagerup, love for whom had inspired him to set to music H. C. Anderson's heartfelt lines. During the period of the engagement (three years) to his Danish bride, Grieg was so much under Danish influence that Schjelderup speaks of it as the Danish period in the development of his genius. He was married in 1867, and was much helped by his young wife. The year 1868–69 was a black year for them both. Grieg's best friend and ally, Halfdan Kjerulf, died. The latter, born in 1815, was really the first of the Norwegian national composers. Among his compositions there are about a hundred songs and forty piano pieces that are mostly tinged with Norse colour. He has been referred to as a martyr, but Grieg writes: "Kjerulf lived in Christiania as a teacher and composer, appreciated by all." Next year Grieg's little thirteen-months-old daughter died. This was the only child born to them, and their cup of bitterness seemed emptied to the dregs.

In 1868 Franz Liszt wrote to him from Rome a letter full of praise, after perusal of his sonata (Opus 8), inviting him cordially to spend some time at Weimar. Commendation from so great a man as Liszt induced the Norwegian

Government to grant Grieg a sum of money which enabled him to visit Rome and meet Liszt personally. He wrote two letters home that are too long to reproduce here, but which are of the greatest interest, showing how fully Liszt appreciated his splendid talent. After Liszt had given him a grand exhibition of his own tremendous musical power he turned to Grieg and said jauntily: "Now let us go on with the sonata." Grieg continues: "You must bear in mind, in the first place, that he had never seen or heard the sonata; and in the second place, that it was a sonata with a violin part, now above, now below, independent of the pianoforte part. And what does Liszt do? He plays the whole thing root and branch, violin and piano,—nay, more, for he played fuller, more broadly. The violin got its due right in the middle of the piano part. He was literally over the whole piano at once, without missing a note, and how he did play." Grieg left the house feeling strangely hot in his head, but with the consciousness of having spent two of the most interesting hours in his life.

After his return from Rome in the following year he founded the "Musical Society" in Christiania, largely helped by Johan Svendsen, who became his successor when he left the capital in 1874. Johan Svendsen's co-operation with Grieg in the sixties and seventies, and his subsequent wide-ranging activity as conductor and composer, have left their ineffaceable traces in the Norwegian musical world. His works, apart from his employment and arrangement of national airs, have not the same strongly national character as those of Grieg, but he possesses sense of form and the art of instrumentation to a remarkable degree, is a born symphonist and orchestral conductor. His symphonies, fantasies, Norse Carnival transcriptions for string

orchestra, chamber music, romances, and male choruses are all of the greatest artistic value. Grieg and Svendsen were justly honoured and rewarded by the Norwegian Government, who presented each with an annuity of £88 a year for life.

Here another man, one of the wonderful group of great men of our time, makes his entry into Grieg's life. Henrik Ibsen, on the 23rd day of January 1874, writes to him from Dresden a long letter, asking if he is willing to co-operate with him, and write the music for his *Peer Gynt*. Ibsen goes on to say: "The following is what I have in view. I intend to arrange *Peer Gynt*—of which a third edition is to appear soon—for performance on the stage. Will you write the required music? Let me tell you as briefly as possible how I project the structure of the play."

Then follows long explanations of the greatest interest, and he finishes this letter, that was all the world to Grieg, with the following words—

"Such, approximately, is my plan, and I now beg you to let me know if you are willing to undertake the work. If you consent, I shall at once communicate with the director of the Christiania Theatre. . . . Your devoted friend, HENRIK IBSEN"

Grieg lost no time, but got to work at Sadviken, near Bergen, and from his pen flowed the inspired music which, more than any of his other works, has made him known as an original and fascinating composer.

In 1877 he again left Christiania, to which he had returned after his first hearing of *Peer Gynt*, and went to live at Lofthus. But the curiosity of the tourists was too much for him; they had a habit of watching

him from boats outside his windows, and they, the common herd, at last drove him away in 1885 from a spot he loved. He made his home at Hop, building his villa Troldhaugen, where he now lives.

After leaving Hop the train dawdles along to Nestan, where the line makes a very sharp bend, striking off north-north-east. Up a valley called Langedal, over brawling streams and past mountain lakes. Soon we began to run downhill to the banks of the Arnevaag, an inky narrow inlet. Here were a village and church for all the world like a little model from a toy box. The line now made a sharp bend to the south-east, all along the rocky shore of the winding Sör Fjord. At the foot of the steep hills were many little boat-houses, each with its little slipway over the boulder-strewn shore. There were most queer traps for catching fish moored to buoys out in the fjord, looking like large set pieces for fireworks lying on their backs or propositions in Euclid. One of them would have done very well for the *pons asinorum*.

On the island of Osterö across the water was the neat white little wooden church of Hans, more like a toy than ever, standing at the foot of the great hummocky mountains which towered into the sky almost covered with birch trees.

On we went, sometimes through woods, then out along the edge of a precipice, through tunnels with now and then a leap over a torrent, then more tunnels, and then out upon a narrow ledge cut in the grey walls of rock, which stretch upward, dark and gloomy, to the clouds, where patches of snow linger in the crannies. The fjord narrows here to little more than 500 yards. Parts of Osterö look very desolate, and opposite Staghelle there were only two minute white cottages, one close

by the water and the other high up on the shoulder of the great hill. I wonder if the neighbours are good friends, or if they quarrel? There is no one else to talk to for miles and miles. Here the line bends once more to the right, and, leaving tidal waters, climbs up the Dals-Elv between upright walls of stone, broken here and there where the rocks have tumbled in confusion from the misty mountain tops.

There is a bright green flat, smooth and wide, where the farmers are cutting odd-shaped lanes and squares in the standing grass, or piling the hay on hurdles to dry. Then we pass a plank church, the windows made with the glass quite flush with the weather boarding, and the narrow wooden mullions cut into grotesque imitations of a Gothic window. After that follow more tunnels and woods of birch, when suddenly we burst out on the tidal waters of the Bolstad Fjord. For a moment there is a marvellous vision of rugged crag and wooded dell, all mirrored in the glassy surface. Then more tunnels, some of them pierced with little peep-holes, through which we catch tantalising glimpses of placid waters. Out again on a little terrace cut half way up a cliff. Lower down we see for a moment the road blasted out of the rock, and winding along a few feet above the water's edge. On the other bank is a tiny farm set on a triangular patch of soil, which seems to have slipped down bodily from the mountain,—a sort of "Tom all alone" surrounded by lofty cliffs. Next we catch sight of a moraine left here by the old glaciers, now covered with farms and bright green fields.

At Evanger the cultivation spreads up the steep mountain side just like a patchwork quilt made of many different tints of green stuffs. On the lake the villagers were rowing to church, all in their Sunday broadcloth,

And as they fly past, and drop out of sight, a great waterfall takes their place, tumbling headlong into a black chasm worn in the rock, a wonderful contrast to the clusters of harebell and meadowsweet or the peaceful hay fields that scent the air.

Nearing Voss, the waters of the Vosse-Elv come rushing down, a mighty torrent of boiling, seething, white and green water, the course of the river checked by a huge boulder in the centre. The whole volume of water splits and tears round through two narrow channels between the boulder and the banks. These streams meet again, forming a cauldron of spirting, rushing, roaring, and whirling foam. In parts the stream was very strong, and covered with whirling eddies. In the slack water were the first salmon ladders we had come across.

Vossevangen was just a little disappointing after the beautiful scenery that had led up to it. Being Sunday, all the good folk that were able had joined the train at the various stations on the way to their favourite churches. The married women were dressed in black sateen skirts closely pleated round the waist, tight-fitting bodices, and the most funereal black silk bonnets that can be imagined. These had dangling black oats at the top, broad black strings tied in a severe bow under the chin, and a short black frill at the back. Their faces looked melancholy, or shall we say devout? They really must have looked melancholy, as all my sympathy went out to a group that alighted from the train at Evanger. These walked two and two, wending their way across the bridge which spans the Vosse-Elv to the little church beyond.

A young woman came first, carrying a child, but so wrapped up that by the look on her face I assumed it to be very ill, if not dead. Older women followed with

VOSSVANGEN

bowed heads, their hands clasped over their prayer-books. The rear was brought up by a group of men, all in black cloth and soft black clerical hats. Quite a mournful note they made as they walked through the fields, bright with crimson foxglove and lacy heads of cow parsley. I heard later that this was a christening party. The faces of the women might have been accounted for had the christening been a matter of life and death, as it was a thousand years ago when the new-born infant was laid on the floor to await the arrival of its father.

This Viking or Spartan, on entering the room, had the infant placed upon his knee. If he accepted the child as his own he was wont to cover it with a fold of his cloak. Then he looked at his child intently, to judge of its appearance, proportions, luck, and temper, and, satisfying himself that the new-born offspring was well shaped, he decided whether it should live or be exposed. Then took place the most important and sacred ceremony of "name fastening," or baptism, the sprinkling of water upon the child, a holy custom that had come down from the remotest time, being lost in the mist of ages. A vessel filled with water was brought in, which the father poured over the child, at the same time calling in a loud voice, so that all men should hear him, something like the following: "Ivar shall the boy be named, after his grandfather. He will of Odin's family the foremost man be called. He will fight many battles, and be much like his mother; he will be called his father's son, for he will wage war from early age, and wander far and wide."

After the ceremony the life of the infant was sacred. His father had no longer power to expose him, or to take his life; should he do so it would be murder. It seems like a dispensation of Providence for the poor

mother that after these events, which would be most harrowing for her, had taken place, the utmost silence was enjoined to allow the inseparable triad or trinity—Urd "the Past," Verdandi "the Present," and Skuld "the Future"—to forecast the life of the infant. These three genii shaped or foreordained the life of every human being at its birth. Du Chaillu tells us so in his romantic history of Ivar the Viking.

But this is a digression. I was about to mention the lasses who walked about Voss without black bonnets or anything else on their youthful heads. They wore pretty red close-fitting bodices, fine white full-sleeved shirts, lace aprons, and black skirts. A prettier dress, or more dainty, could not be found in a long day's march. Unfortunately, like most good things, this rural fashion is going out, and the ugly ill-fitting blouse and skirt taking its place. Soon the national dress will be worn by the waiting-maids alone.

We had thought one day would be sufficient for Voss, but somehow this drew out into three, and if time had allowed no doubt three more days could have been well spent. It was the perfect peace that pervaded the place that made it so delightful. For hours we sat amongst the tall grass, the light breeze rippling the flowers and carrying with it the sounds of the workers around and in the village below. Voss will ever be associated in my mind with the voices of the women, which drifted up to us like the music of a small gurgling stream. The mountains were near, but agriculture had taken complete possession of the plain. It lay at our feet, a perfect kaleidoscope of an endless variety of beautiful colours that crept up the mountain side till cultivation was no longer possible. Where the meadows ended the pine took up the tale and clothed the ridge, while beyond was

visible the dark blue of the steep sides of the snowclad Jostedalsbrae.

Verdandi, the old Norse representative of the present, must have been wandering. Resplendent in beauty and freshness, butterflies always surrounded her, for she typified immortality, and held in one of her hands the life-thread of every human being. Her garment shone like a silvery cloud, and from her long flowing hair sprang rays of light more brilliant than those of the sun, sending their radiance all over the world. With unbounded joy she looked into the future, and into immortality. Hope she gave to all the children of men, and hid from their sight the breakers ahead. And so it was, one could but live for the day, earth's beauty sufficing.

It must always strike the visitor to Norway how very few really old churches, monasteries, and houses remain as landmarks in the life of a people and country of such historic interest. The oldest buildings now existing are no doubt the churches that took the place of the "Hov" or heathen temples in Scandinavia. These last appear without exception to have been burnt to make room for churches, on the introduction of Christianity in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Mr. Johan Meyer, in his able article on Norwegian architecture, says: "It is not easy to determine which of the extremely simple churches of rough-hewn stone belong to the early part of the eleventh century." It was during the flourishing period which lasted for about eighty years, when the stormy times in Norway's history had suddenly passed away, and the stillness that ensued during the reigns of Haakon Haakonsson, and his son Magnus Lagaboter, was likened by one of its historians to "the stillness on a battle-field after the battle," that a number of buildings of

importance rose under the direct supervision of this King. Bergen was then the principal town, and several important parish churches, without aisles, were erected in the diocese, the church of Vossevangen being one.

The church at Voss might be called "plain but honest," surmounted as it is with its quaint black tower. Close by it is not even very interesting, having been so often renewed that one is doubtful if any ancient remains are left dating from 1271. There are some tablets to pastors of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, a nice candelabrum of 1733, and a Bible of considerable interest, and older than anything else that meets the eye, dated 1589. All the same, this quaint little church takes its place in the landscape; and whatever it may be close by, from the fields above its picturesqueness is undeniable.

Fletcher's Hotel was full as usual, rooms being booked for weeks ahead. In the great salle every seat at the tables was filled with walking, cycling, and driving tourists. No more genial or buxom hosts could exist. Standing behind the buffet with eagle eyes, they attended to the wants of the community, directing and supplying the maids in waiting, who looked so pretty and neat in their national dress. This hotel is also one of the largest posting stations, being on the high road to Bergen, to Gudvangen on the Naerö Fjord, and Eide on the Hardanger. All day long the carioles and stolkjaerres come and go, with all the bustle attending our coaches in England.

On the upper road diverging to the right from the Bergen road, to the west of the hotel, is the farm of Fin, and beside it the Finneloft, a fine old timber house dating from 1300. It looks newer and far more substantial than the weather-boarded houses of the present day, which are much wanting in the picturesque, and far more often mar than improve the landscape. Apparently

the present generation has not the fine feeling for colour that their ancestors possessed, and that was so necessary as a contrast and an enlivening note to the wooden interiors.

This old Finneloft must have been built at about the same time as the wonderful Stav churches, of which more than twenty are still standing, the greater number in the mountain districts and in Sogne. The nut-brown log walls are of good proportion, the upper passage is supported on the boldly cut ends and projecting beams of the floor, the whole running round the building forming a protection to the lower part of the walls. The roof juts far out over all. On the threshold stood an old man, who volunteered in good English to fetch the key. A splendid cicerone he made, touching each object with a sort of homage as belonging to his forefathers. Expatriated in early life through want of space from his old home to the New World, he had just landed with some hundred other Norwegians to revisit the home of their youth before death overtook them.

Mr. Laing quotes some interesting instances of the length of time that some of these bonder estates continue in one family. Hrolf Blakar, of Blakar, in Lom parish "preserves a head-piece or helmet complete, with an opening only for the eyes, and parts of a coat of mail, a long sword, and other articles of his ancestors; also a writing of King Haakon Magnusson, the younger, who lodged a night in Blakar Gaard, in the fourteenth year of his reign, anno 1364. In many instances the title-deeds by which the existing bondi hold their estates are written in a dead language, the old Norsk, or Icelandic.

Many of the relations of Rolf Ganger, the conqueror of Normandy, and the ancestor of our Norman line of

Kings, are still represented by their descendants, who are peasant proprietors in Norway and Iceland. If the royal families of Europe, and our aristocratic families whose ancestors "came over with the Conqueror," could trace their lineage far enough, they would find the farms of their ancestors among the gaards of Norway, with nearly the same boundaries as they had a thousand years ago. In many instances the present bonder would be the direct descendant of the elder son of the common ancestor, while the prince or nobleman would have descended from a younger son. Then as now, when the farms were too small for subdivision, the eldest son inherited intact, while the younger went to seek their fortunes on the seas and in distant lands. The House of Finn might well be as old as the gaard of Hrolf Blakar.

"Yes, sir; I guess these are mighty old, some of these. Look at this old carved bit of wood, some sort of calendar, I take it, with the signs all along and the days of the week. No; I couldn't read it myself, but you may depend they could, those old people. These Bibles,—why, yes, they are old too. Look at the date. That's more than three hundred years ago, isn't it? The harness, yes, and the horse collar, that comes down from the same time too. You see, they had silver bells for weddings, and these others were for everyday use. The sledge too, they were fond of bright colour in those days, and they made things strong too. They wanted them to last. Look at these great beams, and see the way they are fitted. A fine piece of work, I call it. What are those holes round under the eaves? Why, they are to shoot through, I reckon, when the house was attacked."

From the farm of Fin our footsteps followed a path skirting the upper end of the Vangsvand, through a long

vista of pine woods, at the very edge of the sandy shores of the lake. The sun was setting, making the tall trunks of the trees glow a deep red. The excited voices of children were heard as they dipped in and out of the lake. Expressions of pleasure came across the water from a fishing party, who from the cold depths drew up salmon trout after salmon trout. The smell of the pine saturated the senses so that it was with difficulty we bade adieu to Voss.

CHAPTER IX

THE SOGNE AND NAERÖ FJORDS

WE left Bergen on a lovely evening. There was quite a crush of people on the quay watching for the launch that was to bring the German Emperor on shore. His great ship was anchored just outside the yacht camber, and looked most imposing. It was late when we got out to sea, but the captain's last remarks as we shook hands before retiring to our cabin weighed on me all night. "Mind and be up early; we shall be entering the Naerö Fjord about four. Don't miss it; it is splendid." The first land I saw was the Sulen-Oer, a group of islands—the "Salundare of the Frithjof's Saga." I knelt many times on my bunk during those few hours to look through my port. Nothing but unattractive rocks, worn smooth by the old ice and restless ocean, rewarded me the second time. My next peep was up a narrow arm stretching away into what seemed infinity.

This "Sogne," from the old word narrow, bears out its name from Sognefest to Skjalden, winding into the country for some hundred and twelve miles, ending in a number of long narrow arms, and is terribly deep, 4000 feet in places. Again I peep, this time at narrow banks fringed with luxuriant orchards, waving corn, and pleasant dwellings. Once again I look, but only to dress quickly; the ship is steering into the Naerö Fjord.

Looking at Baedeker, I see he marks this fjord with two stars. I approve of his taste; nothing could be more splendid. The scenery of the Hardanger is gentle in comparison, soft and pretty. The Naerö Fjord is the south-west arm of the Aurlands Fjord, and the grandest of all the ramifications of the Sogne Fjord. At first it is about nine hundred to a thousand yards in breadth, but narrows to two hundred yards in places. When we came on deck it was hardly light enough to sketch, the fjord being in a half twilight owing to the huge cliffs on either side. The air was chilly and necessitated additions of coats and rugs. Not more than five or six of the passengers were on deck; the crowd, in the arms of Morpheus, missing the grandeur of this wonderful piece of scenery. In places it seemed quite impossible that our ship would be able to turn. The height of the great cliff made the fjord look more narrow than it really was. As the sun rose it was a magnificent sight, just tipping the heads of the huge walls of living rock, leaving gloom below.

By six o'clock we had neared the head of the fjord. Even at this early hour it was possible to trace men walking along the road with horses and carts, collecting from far and near to meet the ship, but so dwarfed by the height above them that it was only with the glasses that they could be distinguished as men. The Naerodals-Elv (river) rushed out to meet us, colouring the water a brilliant pale green. From either side the waterfalls tipped over the precipice with a drop so sheer that after some hundreds of yards the water dispersed in the air. At the head of the fjord lay the farms. The mountains enclosed the ravine in the same way as they enclosed the fjord, leaving the hamlet devoid of sun during the long winter months, and

during the summer surrounding it on all sides by the sound of many waters.

As we approached the anchorage it was found that a Hamburg-American liner, that looked most insignificant amidst her surroundings, had taken up the berth *Vectis* considered her own. Had she not in company of others painted her sign on the great rock alongside her berth! The first cast of the lead was forty-five fathoms, the second forty-two. Thump! thump! thump! went the propeller as the engines reversed, and a great seething mass of foam burst out from under the counter, and washed slowly forward as the ship lost her way. Thump! thump! thump! thump! and the after end of the *Vectis* is the centre of a perfect vortex of fierce little waves, which breaking off in ever-widening circles dimple the calm surface of the dark green fjord. "She's going astern, sir," sings the leadsman. "Let go," says a voice from the bridge. There is a tremendous splash, and the chain rushes madly out through the hawsepipe with a harsh grating roar, whilst a thick mist of iron rust and powdered paint rises into the air, through which the Lascars on the forecastle are dimly seen, like phantoms tending the whirring cable as it leaps up from the depths of the chain locker. Shackle after shackle goes plunging down overboard, and the brown cloud covers the whole fore part of the ship, coating everything in dust.

Breakfast! The wonder is the quantity one eats at sea. At nine the first horn sounded for the boats. On shore the stolkjaerres, carioles, and four-wheeled carriages drawn by two horses stood in rows along the little quay. It is well to say here that the chief advantage of the cariole is its lightness. It is simply a little car that will go through or over anything, the body shaped rather gracefully, like a canoe. There are

CARIOL AND FJORD HORSE, NAERODAL

two long thin shafts with two wheels at one end, and a pony at the other. This canoe-shaped car is placed upon the shafts, between the wheels and the pony. One person can just sit in it. He has to dispose of his legs as he may; either arrange them horizontally on the shafts or dangle them in the small space between his seat and the pony's tail, or otherwise as his ingenuity may suggest. The luggage is placed on a flat board nailed to the shafts, over or a little behind the wheels. The small boy who has to take the horse back to the station usually stands or sits upon this board, or the luggage; these to some extent counterpoise the weight of the traveller, and diminish the pressure on the pony's back. The stolkjaerre is a larger car that will seat two in front, and sometimes two at the back. I noticed that it was quite a usual thing for the driver to stop for a moment on the road and pick up a companion and give him or her, as the case might be, a lift on the step. It was not conducive to the legitimate passenger's comfort, but it obtained, I suppose, from long habit. The four-wheeled carriages are quite comfortable, but the fine look-out ahead is spoiled by the broad back of the coachman who sits in front.

Thirty or more of these carioles, stolkjaerres, and carriages streamed along the road, all on our way to Stalheim. The ponies were a pleasure to sit behind, —sturdy, well-fed little brutes, who moved along just as they pleased, the drivers jumping down and walking for every little hill, saving their horses as much as possible. No whips, no horrid cries like the Italians to goad them on; merely a sharp prut! when they were to stop. These pretty little fjord horses, with their strong short necks, neatly cut manes, knowing faces,

round rump and long flowing tails, sorrel, dapple, or dun, look for all the world as if they should be on green wooden stands with four white wheels. These little fellows hail from the western country. They are rarely more than 60 inches high, and are distinguished by a strong frame. They are hardy, gentle, and active, and as a working horse in the fjord and mountain districts cannot be replaced by any other breed. The Gudbrandsdalen horse, of the eastern country, named after the district where its systematic breeding and raising has been carried on for a long time, is a rather larger horse, some 63 inches high, generally black or brown in colour. It is of the same build as the fjord horse, has splendid legs, and is quick and strong as a working and carriage horse. This is the breed that is used by the farmers all over the eastern part of the country, and in the districts round the Trondhjem Fjord. For the best stallions up to 6000 kroner are paid, but the average for a good working horse is 700 to 800 kroner.

We started in a long line through the valley, passed the little hotel and a group of farms and weather-boarded houses; their roofing of flowering sods redeemed them from ugliness. The river ran alongside through a narrow band of cultivated land, which did not seem enough to keep the people. When we saw the same spot in the autumn, ragged, poor crops of barley were stacked like men running across the fields in sacks. A stake was driven into the ground about the height of a man. The barley, tied into small sheaves, was threaded on the stake, head downwards one above the other. This seemed to us a most sensible means of drying the late crop, the wind and sun being able to circulate round each stack.

A little farther on we come to another ingenious

contrivance which our driver called a lopus string. This consisted of a thick wire that led from a wooden windlass on the ground to the top of the cliff hundreds of feet above, where was perched a saeter. The owner sent down his hay by hooking it in bundles to the wire, which takes it with expedition to the valley below. Round most saeters there is a piece of ground, fenced in and manured, on which grows a fine nourishing grass. This is mowed with tiny scythes, the hay hung on hurdles to dry, and sent down in the way I have described. This hay is carefully stored and kept to feed the cattle during the winter months, when they return to the farm in the valley.

The road was a fine one, neatly and well kept, though hardly wide enough for two carts to pass. The carriages we met had to pull up whilst our long line scraped by. Imagine, mountain after mountain, one behind the other, a brawling torrent running over grey boulders (a salmon river by the bye) dividing these towering walls of rocks. The road ran alongside the river, a pale yellow thread, gradually winding higher and higher with rocks neatly placed at regular intervals. In between these rocks was a beautiful growth of wild feathery field flowers, making a delightful edgeway to the road. Only ordinary English flowers, harebells, cow parsley, scabious, etc., but none the less beautiful for that. The road grew steeper and steeper. Our horse came to a full stop, and we brought up alongside the other cars that stood at ease on a level scooped out of the mountain side, a sort of rest place close to the bridge. All jumped down to finish the remaining steep on foot. By the side of the way were some old people, men and women, carefully cutting the grass with a little sickle. This they gathered together, every blade, with a small brush

and pan. Nothing is wasted in Norway, not even an ounce of soil. Ploughing loosens the earth on the hillsides, and the rain gradually carries it down to the fields below, which slowly rise; but the careful husbandman with great trouble carries it uphill again load by load.

This steep ends the valley. It is called the Stalheimsklen or cliff. Up this the road zigzags, and takes nearly an hour to reach the top. Little ones by the roadside stood with bunches of wild flowers, offering them shyly to us. I hope the tourist will not spoil them and turn them into beggars. It is a little graceful act which should always be accepted, the little one's face when you take her proffered bunch showing that money is not what she is asking for. A carriage and horses can drive up this zigzag; but it is very hard work, the horse having to tack all the way.

Lunch was waiting in the great wooden hotel, that has been burnt down many times, when we arrived at Stalheim. All was bustle as the tourists, who had come overland from Bergen *via* Vossevangen, were expected. It was rather a question if there would be sufficient room for the whole company. The maids serving were the same type as our blonde English women, big of frame, fair skin, pretty yellow hair, and nice open faces. We seemed such a crowd to be together at this lonely spot, amongst the magnificent views of valley and fjord. Steep bare mountains rising on every side, so immensely grand in comparison with the noisy humans whose talk in the great saloon hushed and overmastered the roar of the waterfall hard by. Finishing first, we retraced our steps well ahead of our friends, and selected a quiet corner over the edge of the steep road to sketch.

NAERODAL

The rain-clouds were gathering, and slowly creeping up the valley. A grey misty veil hung over the fjord, which lay hidden by the overlapping mountains. To the left towered huge Jardalsnut, a mighty mass of bare light grey syenite, made even bigger than he really was by the overlapping mist. Nearer were the mountains, patched with squares and odd markings of birch, beech, and fir, from amongst which issued long scars and rubble, the track of the ever-falling avalanches. To the right and left of us are the Sivelfos and the Stalheimsfos, and below looking sheer down over the tops of the trees one can trace the river and the winding ribbon-like road. Norway's roads are excellent. Comparatively speaking, no country has so many and such good ones, but as soon as one turns off from the main roads to get to the farmsteads on the hill they can only be termed paths, and very often rough ones at that.

It was raining fast when we regained our carts. The little horses realised they would be more comfortable in their stables, and went home at a great rate, flying downhill with a loose rein. There is no brake to the cart, and at first the pace feels rather dangerous, but one soon gets used to it. Wherever you drive it is always the same, and one arrives in safety at the bottom.

The next day being Sunday, we arranged with our steward to pack us some lunch, and landed early. A fjord boat rowed us a little way down the road that leads to Bakke, which is a delightful walk along the margin of the fjord. The road ends at the village, where the mountains rise straight out of the water, leaving no space even for a path. From all round boats were slowly converging on Bakke, on their way to the neat little church with a bold spire that rises on the

fjord side. The Bakke-Elv fussed and rushed through the compact little village; all was quiet at the sawmill, which this noisy torrent works. It was a beautiful walk, and one to be recommended to the man who seeks rest for a holiday. The many waterfalls that descend from high above finish close at hand, diving through the trees and over the rocks, under the road and so into the fjord. All round could be heard the gentle bleating of sheep and goats, and their tinkling bells. The road hugs the shore, and passes from one shady wood of birch to another. We went on till from a point of view Bakke and its surroundings were as nearly perfect as they well could be, so we climbed up a little way out of sight of the road and watched the peasants passing along. Seeing it as we did then, with the hot sun overhead warming and glorifying rocks and fjord, it gave no impression of what it must be in the winter. Even in summer when the sun sinks it leaves the fjord gloomy and cold, but in the dark days this Naerö Fjord must be one of the most, if not the most gloomy spot in all Norway. Narrow waters flanked by stately mountains can be seen in many places, but nowhere do the heights group themselves so impressively.

Travelling through the country, it is difficult to believe that the few cattle one meets, wandering about the hills and valleys, should really amount to so many, and form such an important factor in Norwegian husbanding. Nowhere does one come across the broad, rounded, and muscular frames of the lowland cattle, with their huge bulk of flesh. The cows are small, with red or brindled sides, averaging 660 lbs in weight. They are evidently good milk-givers, if one can be a judge of the hissing quantity that filled the pails of the milkers, that we disturbed on our way to the glacier at Mundal. These cows seemed

very small, but the coast cattle are smaller still, the true weight being from 450 to 550 lbs. There is nothing typical about them as to shape or colour, but they are peculiar in their ability of being able to live on next to nothing.

The Norwegian sheep are also small and slender, the adult animal hardly weighing 90 lbs. In company with the goats they wander about at their own sweet will. Sitting in this quiet spot at Gudvangen, we were surrounded by the tinkle of their bells and their soft baaing. Being Sunday, the goats wanted milking, and were troubled that the hour had passed. Jumping lightly from rock to rock, they collected round us, each with its distinctive marks of one, two, or three ties of scarlet wool through the ear. They wanted to taste the paints, nibble the edge of the sketch books, overturn the water-bottle,—anything, in fact, to while away the time. They browsed round, eating our discarded apple peels and sandwiches, and ultimately sat down, with a far-off look in their eyes, watching the winding road below, with every now and then a pensive bleat. They caught the sound of footsteps first, and sprang to attention, as a bevy of girls with pails came into view. These had white shawls over their heads, their best black frocks hitched up showed their scarlet under-petticoats, and all came along laughing and chatting, with the youths following closely on their heels. The goats hurried down, and waited in line across the road for their mistresses. The sheep followed in a more leisurely fashion, the whole soon disappearing down the road in a cloud of dust. During the last few decades the sheep have been much crossed with foreign breeds, especially Cheviot, which gains in popularity every year in the real sheep districts.

Clouds had risen again just as they had done the

evening before, and the rain came sweeping down before it was possible to get back to the ship. The only thing to do was to sit under a protecting ledge of rock and wait till it was over, though we rather doubted if we should catch the last launch. It was worth it, though the ground around had got very moist before we could make a move. I never saw anything more magnificent. Great rain-clouds came tipping over the huge mountain that rose sheer from the fjord for 5000 feet. The sun broke out every now and then, changing the drops into the most glorious rainbows, with all the colours ever seen. One hears tell of ships dressed rainbow fashion, but man's efforts pale in comparison with the forces of nature, that from where we sat decked the *Vectis* from her bow to the land, and again reflected above all the intense colours in another perfect bow.

The ship was under way, and slowly steaming down the fjord, when she again practically stopped. At the same time she drew in to one side. Few people were on deck, as the dressing bugle had sounded. I was just wondering what could have happened, when the well-known Royal Arms of England and thick gold cables passed across our port. There was no mistaking our own Royal Yacht. I am afraid the reception was mostly from the port-holes. Her Royal Highness, who was returning from the crowning at Trondhjem, was on the bridge, with the little princes, and waved in acknowledgment to our greetings. I for one was glad she saw Gudvangen on such a lovely day.

Slowly we continued our course, taking a lingering look at the Naerö Fjord and its wild surroundings. Down Aurlands Fjord, which is nothing but an enormous ravine, the monotonous murmur of the waterfalls alone broke the silence. We crossed the Sogne, leaving Balholm

to our left, into the wide basin leading to Fjaerlands Fjord, at the head of which lies Mundal, with its snowy background. We brought up just as the sun was setting, lighting up the wisps of cloud that crossed the steep peaks, filling the hollows of the great Skeidsnipa mountain that divides the two valleys, at the head of which the soft though sharp outline of the virgin snow of the Böjumsbrae on the left-hand side, and the Store Suphellebrae on the right, tell against the sky. These are two of the easiest glaciers to get at, and are both beautiful in their way. They are the first that creep down south from the Jostedalsbrae, which like the Folgefond is a great plain of snow, the largest in all Europe—a great untrodden desert of perpetual snow and ice, covering a space of about 350 square miles. Every valley of favourable configuration that branches from this great reservoir of ice is filled with a glacier, or ice torrent, replacing the water torrent of the valleys that descend from the Dovre and other fjelds that are not snow-covered.

At Mundal next morning all the stolkjaerres had collected for the drive to the glaciers, which can both be done, if one likes, in six hours. In my own mind I am sure that these lonely spots are best visited in company. It would be so very easy to slip on a boulder and lie with a broken leg or twisted ankle for hours and days without help, only visited by a curious wandering cow or goat. The road at first skirts the bank of the fjord, and as we drove farther on opened the head of the Böjumsdal, "or valley," with the snows of the Jostedalsbrae as a background.

The road divides on passing a group of farms, the one leading to the Böjumsbrae keeping straight on, the one to the Suphelle turning to the right from the

fork of the road, and crossing the brawling Böjum River. Böjum is considered the grander of the two glaciers. It is whiter and cleaner, no doubt, but it is more exciting to watch for the avalanches that are continually falling from the Suphelle. Neither of the glaciers can be closely approached by the carriages, both having withdrawn within their old limits, leaving a prodigious barren waste of stones which, being devoid of soil, nourishes not one blade of grass. The road ascends the right bank of the river, past two little houses, till it reaches Böjum Saeter, where it is possible to get food. Hence there is half an hour's walk to the foot of the glacier, over loose stones and a maze of streamlets. Close to, one loses the suspended look of the great snow torrent, the foot rises wall-like, with crevices and caves of the deepest prussian blue, paling towards the edges. What makes the difference of the blue and the green lights in the ice is difficult to say. The thick look of the water which issues from it is accounted for by myriads of air bubbles, but what makes its peculiar colour I should much like to know.

I left my companion sketching, and drove off with a friend to see the Suphelle. The driver said it could be done before seven o'clock. His horse was fresh, and with no carts leading the way could go much faster. He was as good as his word. The little horse trotted well, and soon brought us to the cross-roads, where we again discussed if it was worth going on and risking a wet jacket, as all round the clouds were beginning to gather. The skydsguts again assured us he could do it easily. Questioning some of the passengers who were on their way back, and being assured that it was well worth seeing, we again started off at a round trot.

We drew up as we approached the Suphelle Gaard; our way was barred by little cows, who were standing all round, and in the middle of the road, the milkmaids filling their pails with the frothing warm milk.

The milk seemed a great quantity to deal with, though no doubt this was one branch of the co-operative dairies that abound in half the parishes of the country. They number some six hundred and fifty. Most of them have separators and up-to-date equipments. Part of the yield, which is a big one, about two hundred and twenty thousand gallons a day, is sold in England at high prices. Norwegians have not yet succeeded in making a cheese that suits the foreign taste. The girls sitting busily at work amid the birch trees at the side of the road, the little red-and-white or black-and-white kine waiting their turn, or being sent off with a pat on the back to nibble the herbage round about, made a pretty picture. It seemed to me the bell-cow had to bide till the last, as she was tethered and waiting patiently for the end.

The last stolkjaerre was on its way home before we had arrived at the spot where it was necessary to continue the road on foot. The river came rushing towards us with a great noise, unlike the Böjum's streamlets. It poured forth, a full volume of the palest green water, straight out of the bowls of the glacier, streaming from underneath an overhanging arch of ice. At the top the Jostedal piled its snow as though castellated against the dull grey sky. All the time the ice was speaking, groaning, and pattering down a steep wall of rock on which the snow could not lodge. Below again the ice-field spread, not clean and white like Böjum's, but dirty and brown like cinders laid on a slippery road. The edge, soiled and rough, terminated amidst a wilderness of stones.

I jumped at a report, sharp and clear as of a gun; on looking up to the spot from which the noise came I saw a great lump of ice in the act of falling and rumbling down the steep rock. Suphelle was fascinating in its gloom and roughness, which was intensified by the now fast-falling rain.

It was with compunction that I again crossed the Böjums-Elv on to the main road. The valley where I left my companion was full of mist and rain, and the daylight waning. I had visions of the many unpleasant accidents that might befall a deserted traveller left at the foot of the Böjumsbrae; and was greatly relieved when, just as we were sitting down to dinner, in he came, the rain hanging thick on his hair and beard.

"Has anyone been lost?" he asked, as he slipped into his seat at the table. "As I was walking along by the river a farmer met me, and insisted that I was the brother of the sister that was looking for me. 'But you have a sister?' 'No,' I said, 'I have not.' 'But I have come to look for the lost man. You are the lost man?' 'No.' 'Then who is he?'" But there, of course, my husband could not help him, as he knew of no lost man.

Then he resumed: "As one by one the people picked their way down the tumbled mass of boulders and grey sand, and passed out of view, the silence seemed to grow. I found one great round stone, which overhung on the lee side, that made a sort of shelter from the shower. Trouble was evidently brewing in the clouds that gathered so black and threatening among the jagged peaks which towered above me. I pulled out my sketching gear, and began to work. How wonderfully still everything seemed. The green milky glacier water oozed out from among the weird ice grottoes, and was lost among the

smooth egg-shaped pebbles of pink and pale grey granite. Now and then an ice pinnacle would subside, or a little arch crumble into the quiet water. There was hardly a sound, and yet the neat and furrowed surface of the great snow-torrent which forced its way through the narrow gorge suggested only wild turmoil and rapid motion. It seemed impossible that these convolutions and seams which followed each other with such rhythmic regularity were really moving more slowly than the hands of a watch. One can fancy with what tremendous pressure the upper ice forces itself down to fill the space of the melting lower edge. Pushing and crushing, the glacier keeps up its silent struggle through the long ages. It is only now and then that one catches a sort of faint sound which tells of what is passing in the heart of the thick-ribbed ice. Is it a wonder that the old Norsemen, living their lives in solitudes such as these, should people the waste-places with dreadful jotnar and frost spirits?

"Soon the clouds began to blot out the narrow cleft through which the glacier forces itself down into the valley, and now the great cataract of ice seemed as though falling from heaven itself. A moment later a bitter blast came whistling among the ice pinnacles. Hail and rain pattering fiercely blotted out everything. How it poured! Through the turmoil I could hear the tiny threads of waterfalls clashing down from the rocks above; hundreds of them leaping from ledge to ledge.

"By degrees the storm subsided, and the thick curtains of rain and mist were drawn aside, showing once more the ragged glacier full of iridescent colours, cutting sharp and clear up against the pale blue sky. Not a single wrinkle seemed to be changed out of all that contorted mass of snow and ice."

What can I say of Balholm? except that it looked like a jewel, an emerald of the brightest and purest water, set down by the fjord side. At this spot the country seems more luxuriant than any other we visited. Two large hotels and pretty, brightly painted houses adorn the shore, and have as a background deep green woods, encircled by deeper blue mountains, on the tops of which lay a fresh fall of snow. A wide stretch of fjord glitters in front; and the little Esse Fjord runs away to the left, making the prettiest summer picture we had come across.

The boats flocked out towards the ship. Regular fairy boats were these, with high stems and sterns, painted in delicate colours of blue, green, mauve, and pink, with scarlet cushions in each. They say here that a great deal of Balholm's popularity was brought about by Edna Lyall's book, *A Hardy Norseman*. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that Balholm for some months of the year is a delightful spot in which to live. The children greeted us with little baskets full of flowers for sale, pretty little yellow noisette roses of a lovely shade, but with a disagreeable smell one does not associate with the queen of flowers.

At one side of the road after passing the hotels are some humble cottages built of wood and stone, with a very slight pitch to the roof, on which the long grasses wave. The rudimentary chimney formed a distinctly picturesque adjunct to the cottage; built as it was of small boulder stones, square for a little way, with pillars of smaller stone still at each corner. On these rested a large slate, kept in place by turf and stones. It would make a pretty little sketch, with the blue fjord seen through the waving grasses. The fields on either side of the road were full of spring flowers. The children were rosy and

BALHOLM ON THE SOGNEFJORD

healthy, no one seemingly poor or sorry. It was an ideal morning, and made one feel in tune with the day. We prowled on and on down the pleasant road, like the three jovial huntsmen, with nothing much to show after the day was done. A new house was building, and we stopped to look, making up there and then a bright picture for some future holiday, in which one of the party was to build something similar, and invite the company present as paying guests. Still wandering, we came to the Laxvarp, which is a peculiar erection. A long flight of rough steps from the shore is supported at the end by two long camera-looking legs that stand in the fjord. On a small stage on the top is the fisherman, with half a dozen lines in the water baited for salmon. Besides these were two or three seine nets, into which from his elevated perch the fisherman could see all that was going on in the clear water below.

On our way back we looked into the little English church of St. Olaf. It is quite ordinary, built entirely of wood, bright varnished, and tinted the shades of the rainbow by the coloured glass in the windows; but it is quite good in its restful silence for prayer.

Next we ascended a mound surmounted by a great birch tree, and a modern bautasten pointing it out as the tomb of King Bele, a character in the wonderful Frithjof Saga. The thousands of mounds, cairns, bautasteinar (memorial stones), and graves found to this day all over the north show the high veneration the earlier English-speaking tribes had for their dead. These mounds, or cairns like this one at Balholm, are always situated on some conspicuous place, from which a magnificent view can often be had. Most of these bautasteinar bear runes (writings). Du Chaillu tells us that England, being the earliest and most important of the northern colonies,

possesses many monuments and objects with runes; among them a large knife, found in the bed of the Thames, now in the British Museum. From the Sagas we learn that runes were traced on staves, rods, weapons, the sterns and rudders of ships, drinking horns, fish bones, etc.

In Runatal (Odin's rune song), or the last part of Havamal, there is a most interesting account of the use that could be made of runes. It shows plainly that in earlier times they were not used by the people in general for writing, but that they were mystic, being employed for conjurations and the like, and therefore regarded with a certain awe and superstition. In this song Odin, who has had to go through a terrible ordeal to learn the runes, is supposed to be teaching some one and giving advice. Nine was the sacred or mystical number, and in stanza six Odin shows which tribes or people knew the art of writing runes. It is unfortunately too long to give the whole in this work.

THE RUNE SONG OF ODIN

"I know that I hung
On the windy tree
Nine whole nights,
Wounded with a spear.
Given to Odin,
Myself to myself;
On the tree
Of whom no one knows
From what roots it comes.

They gave me no food,
Nor a horn (drink);
I peered downward,
I caught the runes,
Learned them weeping;
Thence I fell down.

Nine songs of might
I learnt from the famous
Son of Bötthorn, father of Bestta;
And I got a draught
Of the precious mead
Taken out of Adrerir.

Then I became fruitful
And wise;
I grew and I throve;
Word followed word
With me;
Act followed act
With me.

Thou wilt find runes
And letters to read,
Very large staves,
Very strong staves,
Which the mighty wise one drew
And the high powers made
And the Hropt (Odin) of the gods carved

Odin (carved runes) among the Asar;
Dain with the Alfar;
Dvulin with the Dverger;
Alsvid (the all-wise)
With the Jötnar;
Some I carved myself . . .

I know incantations
Which no king's wife knows,
And no man's son.
Help is the first one called,
And it will help thee
Against strife and sorrows,
Against all kinds of grief . . .

The ninth I know
If I am in need

To save my ship afloat
I hush the wind
On the waves,
And calm all the sea.

The tenth I know
If I see hedge-riders
Playing in the air,
I cause that
They go astray
Out of their skins,
Out of their minds . . .

The sixteenth I know,
If of the comely maiden,
I want all the heart and the love;
I change the mind
Of the white-armed woman
And turn all her heart . . .

I know the eighteenth,
Which I will never tell
To maiden or man's wife,
Except to her alone
That holds me in her arms,
Or is my sister;
All is better
That one alone only knows,
That is the end of the song . . ."

In stanza ten by hedge-riders Odin means witches and ghosts, who were believed to ride on hedges and tops of houses at night. Norway and its weird crowd of jutals, trolds, werwolfs, and other uncanny spectres must have been an uncomfortable place for nervous people in those days.

From King Bele's mound the road goes on, shaded in places by tall trees, past villas with pretty gardens, especially Fru Dahl's, over the hedges of which I was

rude enough to gaze, fascinated by the smell of roses that grew luxuriantly. Fru herself was in the garden, a handsome tall woman in a lovely coloured red gown that seemed to suit her surroundings exactly. She was tending and clipping her roses. To her courtesy I was indebted, and dared to enter the house, though a stranger, which gave me the opportunity I so much wanted of seeing an artistic Norwegian interior.

Mr. C. Dahl, the painter, received me most genially, and showed me his pictures and some splendid studies of fair Norse maidens. The flower-scented air wafted the long white curtains to and fro; these had a wide band of Norwegian embroidery at the edge. The sunlight, flickering on the varnished walls, lit up a great vase of big scarlet poppies placed on the narrow long table, which had for cover a material that I have only met in Norway. It is too thick for muslin and not thick enough for canvas, and is embroidered in scarlet and blue. The furniture was carved and brightly painted. Quaint old cupboards and curious little cabinets, in some cases made from the ancient carved and painted horse collars, stood about the room. Hand-made hangings from designs by Munthe decorated the walls. Not one colour jarred, yet all was as bright as it well could be, and so exactly what a house built of wood requires.

Monsieur was full of the fête that he was organising for the reception of King Haakon VII., who was to arrive that day or the morning of the next. Accompanying us to the quay, he told how all the boats were to collect and row out to meet the yacht. The people were all to be dressed in gala costume, and, after rounding to, while singing the national air,

were to go ahead and lead her to her anchorage. Unfortunately time and tide wait for no man. The *Vectis* steamed slowly away, leaving Balholm a grand silhouette of purple mountains against a gorgeous yellow sky.

CHAPTER X

LOEN, MEROK, NAES, AND MOLDE

IT was just the soft twilight of the midnight hour when we again steamed out to sea, on our way to the Nord Fjord, which runs parallel to the Sogne Fjord, one degree of latitude farther north. This district, with that of Nord Fjord, in the old days formed the ancient Firdafylke. It was delightful to linger, but still it was necessary to have some hours of sleep. Oddly enough, it was the days at sea, when the clatter and noise of the working ship merged into that of the water rushing past, that it was possible to sleep. Towards the end of the journey it was difficult to say if the fog-horn had sounded or if the anchor had been let go during the night.

We laughed heartily early in the cruise when the captain had told us that he had been asked seriously, by a poor soul suffering from insomnia, if he considered that the quiet of board-ship life would restore him so far as to enable him to sleep. The slightest noise woke him at that time. The captain answered, "Yes, come on board and see." In this he was right, but it was the noise that made the invalid sleep, and not the quiet. For a man suffering as he was, I should say, take a cruise where the ship is constantly in motion.

Before turning in I asked the night steward to tap gently at my cabin door as we came to the mouth of

the fjord. The tap came all too soon. I rose and went on deck, and watched the giant rocks gather and separate, assuming new groupings and forms as we approached and slipped past them. The sea birds rose and dipped again in our wake, flying away with shrill cries and beating wings. For the rest all was silence in these rock-begirt waters. To the right there was some relief in the grey moss-grown rocks by a few slender waterfalls. Then came Hornelen, for which I was missing sleep and comfort. There it stood, rising sheer out of the water for 2940 feet in an extremely narrow passage at the north-east angle of the island of Bremanger. It looked a huge wall of granite, tremendous in proportion to its surroundings, the summit considerably overhanging the base. The driving mist that had arisen with the dawn gave it a look of ghostly and threatening aspect. The air was chilly, the deck uninviting and damp, and no place for pleasure seekers. Tightening my rug around my shoulders, I again retired to the seclusion of my cabin. The ship steamed on; up the Nord Fjord that bifurcates at the head of Daviks Fjord. Eyds Fjord branches a little more to the north, and so too Hornindalsvand. Is Fjord, a little to the south, changes its name at each little bend, and winds away in six branches or minor fjords, four of which are connected to big lakes, at whose head descend the Jostedalsbrä glaciers.

The next bend after Is Fjord is Hundviks Fjord, with its branch, the Gloppen, noted for its beautiful walks and good trout fishing. Steamers ply three times a week to Bergen, and five times weekly to Faleide, Loen, and Olden. These last are three magnificent spots to visit. The main fjord again changes its name to Ult Fjord, and the last bend to Invik. Visnaes was just in sight as I passed through the saloon, where early breakfast was

being served to the party who were leaving for the overland tour to Merok. The outlook was not cheerful. Visnaes was hardly visible, owing to a damp mist that lay across the fjord in bands, rising and mixing with the smoke from the hamlet.

Vectis slowed and stopped whilst a launch and boat were being lowered, then steamed slowly on to Loen, dropping anchor in the bay formed by the head of the fjord. The sun was just breaking through the mist. The fjord lay like a piece of glass, a clear pearly grey. Each dip of the oars and wake of the boats as they pushed off from the shore left a sparkling trail behind. Every line of a pretty white yacht was reflected, backed by the high mountains upside down. The two big hotels standing a little back also reflected in long white lines quite double their height, and with twice as many windows. To one side ran the road by which we were to drive to Lake Loen. It rose upwards through fields of long flowering grass, to a group of houses near which on the right-hand side stood the church at the mouth of the Loendal. A few more farms indispersed with little birch trees gathered here and there by the mountains. The Lofjeld rose to the north with its zone of birch and fir, through which trickled little veins of waterfalls (little only from their distance). Then came rocks and patches of snow, and above all the almost perpendicular steeps with rounded back on which lay perpetual snows. To the south the Auflemsfjeld towered some 5090 feet high.

The first horn sounded at ten for the boats, and by the time the second horn was about to rend the air with its raucous voice a large party had collected in the gangway, at the head of the accommodation ladder. It was a boat full that put off for the shore. As usual the

stolkjaerres were waiting on the quay, and were soon jogging along the road we had seen from the ship. As we drove through the valley the trees in places almost closed overhead. We came up with bright-faced tall girls, stepping out, their kirtles kilted well up, clear of the muddy road, in scarlet bodice with little white shawls thrown over their heads. It was amusing to see one damsel after the other catch hold of the rail at the side of the driver, and with one foot on the step climb deftly into the seat alongside him. By and by my turn came, and I who was alone in front felt a heavy weight aft, my seat in the meantime becoming most uncomfortable. I turned and saw a staid-faced maid was seated behind, her hands demurely clasped in her lap. I made my driver stop, and invited her to fill the seat alongside me, and then jogged along comfortably enough. Later I realised that we were carrying with us the light-handed Phyllises that were to minister to our wants at the rest house at the end of the lake.

The little steamers are not very comfortable or very clean, but the views from their decks are superb. In Norway one seems always to be using the superlative, but in this case, as in the Naerö and Geiranger Fjords, it is quite allowable. Nowhere did I see any more beautiful lake, beginning as it did with fishermen's huts, upstanding hay behind, and outspread nets, and upturned boats on the rocks in front. To one side was a great shoulder thickly clothed with firs; on the other, a thin tongue of land with waving birch and meadows; and in the middle three rocks, with one, three, and five trees on each. The winding vand beyond was shut out by one mountain bluff after another, growing paler and paler, till the last lap lost

LOEN ELV

itself in the clouds, with a blue tinted glacier spreading beneath.

Sandenib rises on the left, with Auflemsfjeld and the Melheimsnib on the right, all over 5000 feet high. From all the mountains, especially the Ravnefjeld, the glaciers terminate abruptly, and melt into rills and waterfalls. On the west side of the lake is the huge Hellesaeterbrae, from which ice avalanches fall, spreading out below like a fan. Wherever a scrap of soil lodged there was the small farm. Here stands the farm of Rödi at the foot of Kvoernhusfjeld, and the farm of Rodal backed by Skaalfjeld, with the Skaalebrae outpouring above. The lake contracts to a strait, and in front towers the Nonsnib, rising sheer to the overwhelming height of over 6000 feet. Passing through a bend of the lake the basin of Naesdal opens out with the Ravnefjeld on the west, the great Nonsnib to the south, and the Bodalsfjeld on the east, with the Kronebrae and the Kjendalsbrae peeping between. Nothing that I have ever seen can beat the grandeur of the scenery around Lake Loen.

It was but a year ago, under the towering heights at the base of Nonsnib where the land looks so rich and fertile, that the turf-roofed gaards of Naesdal stood. These were within hail of the gaards that stood on the land at the mouth of the Kvandals-Elv, which watered the valley. This was a most sociable spot in a country where the farms lie scattered with miles between. A cheery spot, but a little way from the jetty of Kjendal, where the little launch brought numerous parties of strangers all the summer long, and where for part of the day the gaily dressed maids bustled, and laid long tables ready for the hungry tourists who visited the Kjendalsbrae.

In front of the gaard rushed the strait with a tongue of Bödal clothed in verdure rising on the opposite shore. Behind the gaads were the lush fields of meadow-land, intersected with patches of bright green corn and the darker green of the potato. As the land receded, getting steeper and steeper, it clothed itself with birch and alder, which climbed to where the glacier's snows lay in streaks upon the rocks, and melting ran in a silver cascade from ledge to ledge. The eternal snow glistened above in the slightly hollowed shoulder of Nonsnib, which in the early morning threw its great shadow over all — the fjord in front, and the upward slopes of Bödal. None saw in it the shadow of death. But late one winter's night, when the snow lay thick over all, and the hard frost gripped and split, Nonsnib shivered as he felt the stab of the cold enter deeper and deeper into his side. But groan as he would, the frost jutul stabbed deeper still. With a roar that was heard miles and miles away his great side fell out, carrying with it the smiling prosperous gaad of Naesdal, with its sleeping bondi, his sons and daughters, young men and maidens, and his children's children, sixty souls in all, to the bottom of the fjord, a hundred fathoms below. The fjord rose 300 feet in protest, and burst its bounds, carrying boats and sheds, fishing gear, cradles, spinning wheels, and roofing to the head of Loenvand. There they lie scattered on the shore amongst the boats and nets of the fishermen.

This all happened at night on the 15th of January 1906. The lake that was 100 fathoms deep is now only 20. The level to which the water rose is recorded on a monument, and the sister-ship to our steam launch rests high and dry amongst the birch bushes on the top of a hill. A big faint scar on the mountain side is now

NONSNIB, LAKE LOEN

the only indication of the disaster which overwhelmed the smiling homestead of Naesdal.

All was bustle on the landing place of Kjendal. The manager of the hotel at Loen and his waiting-maids were carrying box after box of food and hardware to the wooden restaurant, and he let the fact be known that if the passengers would go their various ways a hot lunch would be ready on their return. Carts were in waiting to drive to the foot of the glacier. Colts waited in readiness to start with the cavalcade, and gamboled ahead of their sturdy mothers all the way. The road was bumpy and rough, but the stolkjaerre went over everything, till we arrived at a swamp, where willow and birch bushes thickly covered the ground. The sound of footsteps was hushed in the springing moist turf and the noise of the waterfalls. The last part of the way was over large grey boulders and stepping-stones to the foot of the glacier. It resembles a great torrent frozen to the mountain side, whilst above lies the pure white snow from which the glacier is borne glittering in the sun. The glacier at Fjaerland fell from the edge of a snow plateau. The glaciers from Jostedalsbrä flow from it, and at its base the stream issues from a magnificent vault of blue ice. It was not safe to go too near, as stones were pattering down all the time, and in some cases rebounded a considerable distance. Arriving back at Kjendal, the manager had been as good as his word. Lunch was waiting. A hungry party sat down to salmon with cream sauce, stewed mutton, some kind of batter eaten with bilberry jam, and very good light Norwegian beer. It was a drowsy party that once more retraced its way down the beautiful lake. Every seat in the stern of the launch was occupied by the men, and soon the "Vecti" slept, whilst a

Norwegian, in rapid English intermixed with Norsk, told me the harrowing tale of Nonsnib.

Merok (or Moeraak) is a small hamlet nestling round the head of the wondrously beautiful Geiranger basin. It is dominated on one side by the Saathorn, some 5835 feet high; and on the right by the snowfields of the Flydalshorn. The sound of rushing water fills the air, from the roaring, foaming Storfos, that from the heights above looks like a band of silver against the dark face of the mountain. It gathers force as it flows, and is joined by the minor waterfalls of the Kleivafos, Storsaeterfos, and the Holefos, and spreads its pale green glacier waters in a broad green line for miles down the fjord. The few scattered houses forming the hamlet are built on an old moraine, above which stands the little church with its small white spire; and beyond again a fair sized comfortable looking hotel, which is not the only one. Though the place is so small it is a good centre for excursions. We thought it quite odd to find two other great ships besides ourselves in the basin. The *Blucher*, a German ship far bigger than *Vectis*, and the *Argonaut*. In no other part of Norway did we meet so many tourists at one time on shore. Launch after launch towing two and three boats disembarked their passengers on the small quay, where a big array of superior looking, highly varnished and red-cushioned stolkjaerres awaited the arrivals.

With very few exceptions the horses were a light drab colour, hog-maned, and with their tails plaited with bright coloured braids. The stolkjaerres were soon occupied, and the long line trotted off in their order, which often makes it very dull work for the cars in the rear should the first horse be a slow one. The etiquette brought about by the width of the

roads prohibits one car from passing another. The road at Merok is a wonderful piece of engineering, smooth and well kept; it winds and winds in a zigzag up the face of the cliff with uniform big blocks of stone placed on the edge of the steep. The numerous bridges are built like the cyclopean walls of old, of carefully sized blocks without a trace of cement to bind them together. Here the comparison ends. The ancient Greeks did not understand the building of arches; the Norwegians do. It is good to scramble over the edge close down to one of these, and admire the perfect construction that stands the bruising and beating of the torrent as it rushes through. The water strikes the boulders in its descent, and throws a fine spray over the long-bending grasses and delicate harebells that line its path on either side.

The visitors, English and German, glanced at each other, as only rival nations can, as they met on the road. The more active members of both parties discarded the stolkjaerres, taking short cuts from one level to another up the steep stony banks. Up one steep Teuton and Briton joined hands. Neither could have done without the other. The obstacle to be surmounted was a boulder, round, long, and smooth, with but very slight foothold in a crevice where it joined on to the face of the cliff. Young Germany was thin, tall, and spectacled. Frau smiling and stout. Herr very stout, red in the face, and carefully enveloped in a soft brown shawl whose fringed points hung down back and front, nearly touching the ground. Frau said "Com," and young Germany sprang to the front, making a dash for the rock, his finger-tips barely holding on to the ledge. The Briton brought up reinforcement in the shape of a big birch bough, which

supported him in the rear till he had a firm hold. Herr waved and shouted, "Cherrmans to dee front," quoting Admiral Seymour. Holding on to young Germany's outstretched hand, the British scrambled up next. Frau was hauled up, laughing, bunched and plump. Herr exclaimed: "It tis impossible; mein fat will not allow"; but Briton and German held out a helping hand, and Herr, willy-nilly, amid much laughter, was hauled to the top. "Mein Gott," he panted, "the fat of the son of my father was never meant to climb."

Towards the end of the winding road, and after crossing a noisy brook, a corner was found suitable for the artist to wield his brush. To one side was the typical new gaad (or farm), with its big living house, bare of any ornament, painted white picked out with red. The storerooms were below, and behind the great barn with hayloft and stables. Every available morsel of soil was carefully tilled up to the bare rocks, where pasturage stopped. The firs and birch continued the march, crowning the summit of the near hills. Beyond again lay the mountain peaks, purple in the distance, seamed and lined with great patches of snow.

At our feet in a slight hollow was an old farm, far more picturesque in every way than the new. What paint could beat the silvery grey of the old timber! And what roofing could possibly compete with the birch-barks covered with flowering turf! The buildings cluster closer together, like some small settlement, and give a look of comfort that the newer farms do not possess. All around is the waving grass, and a mass of our ordinary English wild flowers,—giant harebells, that go so well with the mauve scabious; cow parsley, with its light, lacey, flat heads of bloom; long thin-

stemmed buttercups; great pink heads of sweet clover; small heartsease, and patches of pale yellow snapdragon. The grass stood high, ready for the little scythe that cuts round every stone, great or small. The careful husbandman does not miss a blade up or down the hill, on the bank or in the ditch.

Lower still were thick groves of trees, the thin spray of the hidden waterfalls rising above the leafy boughs, and then came a rich level of lush pasture, of an intense green. In the mead the men worked in their shirt sleeves, though the rain had begun to fall, and soon came down steadily. Unable to cope with the weather, we resumed our upward walk to the farm of Flydal, from which we obtained an excellent view of the Hydalshorn and the Blaahorn, while still higher was the Flydalsbrae, a snowy glacier scarred by huge crevices. On our way back we stopped for a moment to look over a jutting rock, an abyss several hundred feet deep to the level of the valley below. The Storfos hurrying to the fjord lay at our feet. Great rocks strewed the meadows, intersected with copses of birch and alder. From this coign of vantage we looked into the amphitheatre which forms the end and head of the Geiranger, which fitly closes this magnificent gorge, forming a contrast to the bare rock sentinels on either side, ending as it does richly clothed with woods and pasture.

Overwhelming is the word that seems to describe this wonderful Geiranger Fjord. Other fjords we had steamed through were fine, beautiful, and even sublime, but none came up to Geiranger. Perhaps it was the evening light that made it look so stupendous; but be that as it may, Geiranger is the fjord one remembers best. The narrow dark waters reflect the long white

waterfalls that everywhere tip over the edge of the cliffs. The many curious formations, and the farms perched on what look inaccessible heights, all combine to make this one of the most weird arms of the sea.

Steaming quite slowly, we wended our way down, passing on our right the gaard of Grande, overtopped by the Lanshorn. A little farther down the cliffs took the curious resemblance of some giant's profile, and high above the water rose the famous pulpit rock. The next bend revealed the Seven Sisters waterfall streaming down the face of the worn grey granite; seven they say, but this must be when the snows are first melting. We could count but four side by side. High up on the slope near them is the gaard of Knivsflaa; its fields slope down to the perpendicular cliffs of the fjord, and look all but inaccessible to man or beast. I heard it was necessary to tether the babies for fear of their rolling over the edge.

Under the deep shadows of these mighty cliffs the ship glides along her course, bordered on either side by walls of grey granite, down which are great black stains as though water was soaking into the surface of the stone. The scenery was so stupendous that a hush fell over us all, as though we were in church. High above the water fell, but from a rock so steep that it lost itself in falling. Another betrayed its existence only by the stretch of white foam on the fjord below. Falls seemed to come from out the clouds, and others like light white veils blew to one side or another. Under the deep shadows the ship crept silently on.

We steamed out to sea and through Molde Fjord in the night, and right along the arm of the Romsdal Fjord, anchoring in Is Fjord off Aandalsnaes. One blast had sounded for the shore, which at the moment looked

anything but tempting. A cold drizzle was falling, and the outlines of the mountains that girdled the fjord were dimmed and in some places entirely blotted out. This stretch of water, usually so beautiful, was wrinkled and fretted, with dull-coloured wavelets striking yet another dreary note in the universal grey. Nevertheless the shore boats were full. Some were for driving; some for walking. At the quay the stolkjaerres and carioles were waiting in close line, the horses more gaily equipped than in most other towns.

Aandalsnaes, or Naes, is the chief approach to the Romsdal, and the enchanting valley of the Rauma. At first the walking was but slow, as it was necessary to stand aside as each cart passed. It was better, on the whole, to look at the houses and hotels, and drink in the sweet smell of flowers, till the last had driven by, and then step out along the moist red road. This valley has a world-wide fame, and is really beautiful from the entrance at Naes to the foot of Romsdalhorn at Horgheim, a distance of about eight easily walked miles. The great Romsdalhorn, 5100 feet high, dominates the valley. It is first seen with beautiful delicate woods in the foreground, of alder, birch, and ash, growing thickly down the banks, and flourishing on tongues of land that stretch into the river. These form broad pools, which in their turn reflect every leaf and branch of the overhanging trees. Silver sand and pebble beaches fringe the edge.

As one ascends the valley gets wilder, the mountains rising patched with forest growths. The trees look up and around, finding room to expand their arms here and there. They clothe the ravine's side like only Norwegian trees can; the juniper, fir, the birch with her rustling leaves, and the heather cluster together,

reminding me of the prologue of *Arne* by Björnson, in which the trees are supposed to talk together, and have made up their minds to clothe the mountains. "Before long the Juniper began to slip. 'Catch hold of me,' said the Heather. Juniper did so, and when there was only a tiny crevice the Heather put in one finger, and where the Heather put a finger in, there the Juniper worked in her whole hand. On they clambered upward, the Fir slowly following them, and the Birch labouring after. 'But it's God's own work,' said the Birch." This last exactly expresses what one feels in this marvellous country.

Higher up the pass is more like Glencoe than any other place I know, but on a much grander scale. Like Glencoe, it too was the scene of the massacre of Colonel Ramsay, Captain Sinclair, and nine hundred Scotch auxiliaries, who had landed a few days before at Veblungsnäs (the little point across the Roma in front of Naes) when trying to force their way through Norway to join the Swedes, then at war with the Norwegians. They were intercepted by an ambush of three hundred peasants at this spot. The natives had felled trees and collected a huge pile of stones on the hill above the road, which they hurled down on the invaders. Most of the Scots were thus destroyed, and almost all the survivors put to the sword. This happened on the 26th of August 1612. Details can be found in Thomas Michell's *History of the Scottish Expedition to Norway.*

This glen is said to be a great fault, with an anticlinal axis, and an upthrow of granite in the crack. But since the world's crust was bent and broken the glen has been full of ice. The breadth from cliff to cliff may be about two miles, the space between being filled with a series of flat steps, which are made of sand and boulders, many

of which are of enormous size. Big stones are piled in mounds and ridges, amongst which firs, birches, willow, and alder grow. Looking down the valley, the course of the ice is marked so clearly that it is impossible to misunderstand the record. Where the stream ran against the bank in a bay the cliffs are deeply scored to a height of about a thousand feet; where the ice turned sharp round the foot of the horn, the marks are fresh. Talus heaps which have crumbled from weathered peaks above, and a small drain washed through boulder-heaps below, are the marks made by weathering and rivers; but they are insignificant beside these ice marks.

From a small lake close to Fokstuen, which is about 3000 feet above the present sea level, a stream runs to the Glomenen, passes Kongs Vinger, and enters the Skagerak. It is joined by a stream which starts from a lake near Röraas, and from hills near Röraas water runs to Elfdal, to Hudiksvalla, to Gefle, and to Trollhatten.

The mountains were still smothered in great white clouds, but we kept on through the drizzle and were fully rewarded, as the body of the clouds soon dissolved, leaving only some feathery white mist which clung about the torrent gullies of the mountain sides, and then slowly melted into sunshine. All the torrents, streams and cascades were at work, from the roaring leaps of the Rauma to Staubacks innumerable, Giessbacks, Kichenbacks, twin Handecks,—in fact, every type of waterfall that pours and dashes down their own chosen courses. The finest of these was situated about half-way between Flatmark and Horgheim stations; it is called the Mongefos, that descends from the Mongegjura some 4230 feet above. Looking up, with an effort that strains the neck, to the frowning wall of rock, a torrent is seen,

pouring apparently out of the blue. It bends smoothly over the topmost edge, as blue as the sky itself, as clear as crystal, with the light shining through. Then it is lost, having made a first plunge of a hundred feet or so down into a boiling cauldron which it has worn out of the rock by its everlasting blows. Again it reappears, shattered to snowy fragments, and, striking the rock once more, spreads out and tears down a long, rugged slope, in white fleeces of broken water. At every resisting ledge clouds of fine spray and mist dash out, the sunlight tinting them here and there with bands of lovely rainbows. Then a great ledge bars its path, and it bounds upwards and forwards into the free air; and, bruised and battered into mere water-dust, fine and light, it struggles even with the slight resistance of the air, and descends with slow, unvarying speed some four or five hundred feet more. Next it showers upon another slope of rock, spreads into a multitude of little rills, and disappears again, till at last it rushes under the road to join the Rauma, and keeps its company to the all-absorbing seas. In nearly all the breaks and hollows of the dark precipitous rocks are patches of snow, some of them so low as almost to touch the cornfields. Amongst all this wild sublimity there are rich substantial farms along the table-lands of the terraces. Should the day be wet a very short skirt is advisable for this walk.

Some people think the Romsdal Fjord, which is a continuation of Molde Fjord, is one of the (many) finest in Norway, and that the view from Molde, alone is worth the journey. That Molde is worth the journey I quite agree, but the fjord at Molde is beautiful without being sublime. To the north are a series of weathered peaks, broken beds of rock, which start away from

THE FUNERAL OF A PEASANT

ERIK WERENSKIOLD

the famous Romsdalshorn, an obelisk of granite about 4000 feet high, off which the snow slides sheer down into the valley. The foot of man is apt to slide, as all climbers know, where snow cannot rest. Yes, Molde's Fjords and Romsdal Fjord are beautiful, and from their extended waters something like fifty peaks can be seen.

Tang tang, tang tang, ring out the bells of Molde across the waters of the calm fjord. What could it be? Fire? Someone else suggested a christening, another a burial, but all were wrong. They were joy bells for a wedding. Tang tang, tang tang, went on the bells, changing as the visitors were stepping on shore to ding dong; wock, much more slowly rung, reminding one of the old Norfolk church, with its three bells, one made of leather that would only ring out wock. Molde was likewise decorated with flags, much sunshine, and, for Norway, many flowers, by which I mean garden flowers. Roses grew in profusion, with pale yellow honeysuckle, masses of bright poppies, and a tall graceful spiræa.

Curiosity and the bells dogged one's footsteps. All unthinking we took the steep path up the hill to the nice wooden church with a pretty steeple. Outside were a number of stolkjaerres for the guests, and one closed carriage from which the bride, clothed in white satin, was just stepping. The procession passed into the church, the door being shut against unbidden guests. The stolkjaerre drivers, leaning against their carts, the rope reins held slack in their hands, eyed the strangers stolidly. To all questions with regard to entering the church they shook their heads, so that one by one the group that had been collected by the bell straggled away. The road ran between an avenue of trees with farms and private houses standing in well-kept gardens on one

side, on the other a magnificent view of the Molde Fjord, lying grey and shimmering, with the wonderful range of blue mountains going away and away to what seemed the open sea.

Again the bells rang a joyous peal The bride had left; the ceremony over, nothing but a few withered flowers remained where the bride had lately stood. The door was now opened, and inside on a little table rested the alms box. The church was filled with a faint sweet smell of syringa and honeysuckle, that was tied and twined round the altar rails, and now hung drooping in the still close atmosphere. Behind the altar was the great picture painted by Axel Ender, of the angel sitting on the tomb of our Lord, telling the sorrowing women that He had risen. The colour is striking and harmonious, and the picture lit up the whole end of the church.

It is not to be wondered at that Molde is so popular. It is one of the pleasantest places in Norway. There is nothing grand, savage, or overwhelming about it, but as a resting-place when the limbs are weary of wandering it cannot be surpassed. There is nothing remarkable about the town itself, consisting as it does of one long main street and a few bylanes with houses and public buildings of the most ordinary character. The two hotels, the Alexandra and the Grand, are large and generally filled to overflowing. Plenty of shops line each side of the street, where bric-a-brac, jewellery, toys, nice furs, and beautiful light cider skin rugs can be bought. There is also a bazaar, where one can see thousands of varieties of Norwegian carvings and modelled work, native costumes, knives, and embroideries.

There are piers and quays and warehouses along the shore, as Molde does a very fair amount of small shipping business. Many steamers like our own call, stay some

hours or days, and add not a little to the prosperity of the town, as few of the passengers leave without spending in furs and knick-knacks more than they had any intention of doing.

The chief charm of Molde is its surroundings. Every part of the town looks out upon a vast expanse of water, which presents the appearance of an immense lake some eight miles across and thirty to thirty-five from end to end. This expanse of water is broken by the long islands of Gjertö, Socterö, and Faarö. On the opposite shore of this great lake is ranged a panorama of mountains that skirts its entire length,—a long array of peaks and horns and fjords with unfamiliar names. The only one easily recognised is the sugar-loaf crown of the Romsdalshorn and the sharp needles of the Troltinderne in the middle of the range. The hills behind Molde abound in delightful walks. They are clothed within a short distance of the ridge with pine, birch, horse-chestnuts, limes, ash, and cherry trees ; roses abound, and some of the houses are overgrown with honeysuckle. Sheltered from the northerly and westerly storms, the vegetation is surprisingly luxuriant, though Molde is nearly three degrees of latitude north of St. Petersburg. One has the choice of rambling in neglected wildernesses, or following the well-made roads and paths which wind up to the heights. The most easily accessible of these is Reknaeshaugen, a canopied terrace standing in the midst of a little public park intersected with winding walks. Going farther up the varde, one comes to a wooden pleasure-house about half-way to the top of the hill, from which it is an easy walk to the summit of the ridge. From Tor Stuen a magnificent and more extended view of the mountain ranges can be seen on the one hand, and a grand view of the sea and the rocky islands that fringe the coast on the

other. The roads are excellent that skirt the margin of the shore for scores of miles, and by one route, a whole day's journey, it is possible to make the entire circuit of the peninsula on which Molde stands.

The place is never dull; people pass to and fro from the steamers, engage carioles and stolkjaerres, or settle up with their skydsgut. The luggage taken to and fro from the landing stage, and the vessels and boats, large and small, arriving and departing, are a constant source of interest. The great lake reflecting the sunset, the wide expanse of water ever before you, ruffled by the wind, or a beautiful calm, are scenes of which one never wearies.

Björnstjerne Björnson was born on the 8th December 1832 at the farmstead of Björgen, in Kvikne, in Osterdalen. In 1837 his father, who had been priest of Kvikne, was transferred to the parish of Noesset, in Romsdalen. In this romantic place the childhood of Björnson was spent. In 1841 he was sent to school at the neighbouring town of Molde, and at the age of seventeen to Christiania to study for the University; his instinct for poetry was already awakened, and indeed he had written verses from his eleventh year. He took his degree at the University of Christiania in 1852, and began to work as a journalist, especially as a dramatic critic. His progress was, however, slow. It was not until 1856 that in *Thrond*, the earliest of his short stories, he began to develop his real talent. In 1857 appeared *Synnöve Solbakken*, the first of Björnson's peasant novels, followed by *Arne*, *A Happy Boy*, and *The Fisher Maiden*. These are the most important specimens of his "bonde-fortællinger," or peasant tales—a section of his literary work which has made a profound impression in his own country, and has made him popular

throughout the world. These novels are full of freshness and beauty combined with remarkable realism. Two of these tales, *Arne* and *Synnöve Solbakken*, are nearly perfect, and offer finer examples of the pure peasant story than are to be found elsewhere in literature.

Björnson was anxious, as he puts it, "to create a new saga in the life of the peasant," and he thought this should be done not merely in prose fiction, but in national dramas or "folke-stykker." The earliest of these was *Between the Battles*, written in 1855, but not produced till 1857. It was followed by *Lame Hulda* and *King Sverre*. All these efforts, however, were far excelled by the splendid trilogy of *Sigurd the Bastard*, which Björnson issued in 1862, and *Sigurd the Crusader*, which was not printed until 1872. This raised him to front rank among the younger poets of Europe.

At the close of 1857 Björnson was appointed director of the theatre at Bergen, a post which he held, with much journalistic work thrown in, for two years, when he returned to the capital. After this he travelled widely throughout Europe. Early in 1865 he undertook the management of the Christiania Theatre, and brought out his popular comedy of *The Newly Married* and his romantic tragedy of *Mary Stuart in Scotland*.

Although Björnson has introduced, into his novels and plays, songs of extraordinary beauty, he has never been a very copious writer of verse. Both his principal contributions to this art were collected in the year 1870, when he published his *Poems and Songs* and the spirited romances called *Arnljat Gelline*; the latter volume contains the magnificent ode called "Bergliet," Björnson's finest contribution to lyrical poetry. It is odd that between 1864 and 1874, in the very prime of his life, he should have displayed a slackening of the intellectual

forces very remarkable in a man of his energy. That he was mainly occupied with politics and his business of theatrical manager during this time may well account for it, but it is likely that his fiery propaganda as a radical agitator would at the time override the poetic side of his nature, and the reality of his calling sap his energy, especially when he supplemented his journalistic work by delivering lectures over the length and breadth of the northern countries. He possessed to a surprising degree the arts of the orator, combined with a magnificent physical prestige.

From 1873 to 1876 Björnson was absent from Norway, and in the peace of voluntary exile he recovered his imaginative power. His new departure as a dramatic author began with *The Editor* in 1874, and *A Bankruptcy* in 1875, both social dramas of an extremely modern and realistic cast, the second of which has continued to be in many countries the piece of Björnson's which has longest kept the stage. The poet was now settled at the estate of Anlestael in Gansdal, in a house which is a fine example of old Norwegian domestic architecture, and which has been his home since 1874.

In 1877 he published another novel, *Magnhild*, in which his ideas on social questions were seen to be in a state of fermentation, a polemical play called *The King*, and another story *Captain Mansana* followed; and then, wishing for success on the stage, he concentrated his powers on the drama called *Leonarda*, which appeared in 1879. This was an appeal for religious toleration, and it raised a violent controversy that was not allayed by a satirical play, *The New System*, which was brought out a few weeks later. Although these plays of Björnson's second period were greatly discussed, none of them except *A Bankruptcy* pleased on the boards.

He felt the disappointment so keenly that he preserved silence as a dramatist till 1883, when once more he produced a social drama, *A Gauntlet*, which he was unable to persuade any manager to stage. To many people, however, this was considered one of the most skilfully composed "problem plays" of modern times.

A play that achieved great success was one entitled *Over Ævne* (*Beyond our Powers*), which deals with the abnormal features of religious excitement with extraordinary power. Björnson now again turned his back on the stage, and published in 1884 *Flags are Flying in Town and Port: In God's Way*, which is one of the works by which he is best known outside his own country. A number, too, of short stories of a more or less didactic character, dealing with startling points of emotional experience, were collected in 1894; those producing the greatest sensation were: *Dust*, *Mother's Hands*, and *Absalom's Hair*. At the opening of the National Theatre in 1899 Björnson, whose popularity in Norway is unbounded, received an ovation, and his saga drama of *Sigurd the Crusader* was put on the boards with great magnificence.

Björnson is a republican of the most advanced order, and according to his critics his views are pushed forward too crudely for artistic effect in several of his later works.

Two writers of novels who owe much to the example of Ibsen and Björnson are Jonas Lie and Alexander Kielland. Lie was late in developing his talent, and lost much time in wavering between the sentimental and the realistic schools of treatment. His best books have been stories of seafaring life: *The Man with the Second Sight*; *The Threemaster "Future"*; *The Pilot and his Wife*; and *Ruttand*. In Kielland we have a man

who has more talent than Lie, his progress has been more rapid and steady, and he has a clearer idea of what he wishes to do. He began by being strongly influenced by Zola, so say his critics, but to my mind no trace of this is to be found in his *Garman og Worse.* He is one of the youngest of distinguished Norwegian writers.

TRONDHJEM

CHAPTER XI

TRONDHJEM AND ITS KINGS

TRONDHJEM is the strength and heart of the country, and the cradle of the kingdom of Norway. Here, on Bratören, the Norwegian kings were elected and crowned so far back as the hero of my favourite saga, Olaf Tryggvason, who met his death at the battle of Svold in 995. Here he had built himself a palace and a church, which he dedicated to St. Clement, and on the same site rose Trondhjem Cathedral.

As soon as the Norman Romanesque architecture in the middle of the eleventh century had assumed permanent forms in Northern France and England, it appears at a corresponding stage in Norway. The stone churches erected in Trondhjem by the kings Harald Haardrada and Olaf Kyrre, each in turn sheltered the shrine of St. Olaf, and appear especially to have belonged to this first Norman group. This close association with England and Norman France is evident in all their mediæval architecture, and the late Norman style represented in Trondhjem and the Trondhjem district is without doubt the richest.

Here, at the establishment of the archbishopric in 1152, stood Olaf the Peaceful's Christ Church. Eystein was the archbishop, who was especially active in its alteration, to suit the requirements of a metropolitan church. In 1180, for political reasons, he was obliged to flee to

England. Just as it so happened, the choir of Canterbury Cathedral was being rebuilt by William of Sens and William the Englishman, with the pointed arch, and an exceedingly beautiful expression of form, which was the introduction of the Early English style. The horse-shoe forming the east end of St. Thomas's corona in Canterbury Cathedral is probably the model from which the octagon in Trondhjem was taken.

With fresh impressions from England, Eystein determined, on his return to his own country in 1183, to rebuild the choir of Christ Church. Only the lower part of it, and the octagon at the east end which covered the reliquary of the saint, with its aisle and chapels, show Eystein's transition style. The upper parts are fully developed early Gothic, and the arch in front of the octagon has traceries characteristic of the fourteenth century. The roof of the transept is open, and the choir covered with richly ornamented cross vaulting. The material of which it is built (soapstone) gives the walls a soft green shade which contrasts beautifully with the white marble of the pillars. The extreme readiness with which soapstone lends itself to the carver's art is seen everywhere.

During the period from Sverre's death in 1202 until Haakon IV.'s absolute sovereignty in 1240, artistic energies appear to have flagged. But from 1240 to about 1320 is the flourishing period of Gothic architecture in Norway as in England. The treatment of form became lavish and lighter. The pointed arch, bell-shaped capitals with round abacus, and beautifully and firmly modelled foliage, and deep mouldings appeared.

The cathedral has been repeatedly injured by fire,—even as late as 1719 the last took place. Since 1869, when the east part was re-roofed, the cathedral has been

undergoing a thorough and judicious restoration superintended by Mr. H. Christie, who has used and reproduced all the available morsels he could find of the old building. The royal entrance is completed, and from the square tower now rises a finely proportioned steeple. Norway is justly proud of its church as a national monument. The State, the Trondhjem Savings Bank, and subscriptions from private and public sources enable the work required to be carried on.

In an old book I had read that the family pews were very curious, being tiers of boxes made of deal wood, like rabbit hutches piled one above another; but these are now gone. I had also meant to ask if the vault still existed containing the mummified bodies of the Norwegian kings, which about fifty years ago lay heaped one upon another, the coffins broken and the bodies visible. But this I forgot to do, which is perhaps as well, as I should never wish again to be haunted as I had once been by the still form of the priestess of Amen-Ra in the British Museum. The cool soft light and shade of this ancient fane was delightful after the glare and dust of the broad white streets. I never felt the heat as I did in Trondhjem. The little horses were even crushed by it, and went along with steaming sides and bowed heads.

My advice to the visitor to Trondhjem is—see the town first, and the two waterfalls, which make a very nice afternoon's drive. The upper fall repeats in a marvellous manner the look of the frozen glacier torrent of Bojumsbrae at Mundal. But instead of snow, in this case it is seething white water that comes tumbling towards you, turning into clouds of spray as it reaches a more level bed. The lower fall is a cascade enveloped in clouds of mist, as it rushes between banks that are

covered with trees. The country gives one a very good idea of its fertility. The vegetation is rich, and extends all round. One can well imagine that the river rarely freezes, and the fjord never. Leave the cathedral to the end. It is the best monument in the north, and of the greatest interest. If you see over this first you will find that the town suffers by comparison. Seen first, the wide streets, the beautiful fjord, the large warehouses supported on piles, and the quaint unadorned look of the wooden houses are interesting, if not picturesque.

The heat was so intense on shore that it was most delightful to once again put out to sea. As the launch approached the ship we looked at each other. "Do you think you can dance a step?" I asked my girl neighbour. We were all limp with the heat, and fanned ourselves with the ends of various parcels we had collected on shore. "I don't think so; I can't walk a step," was her answer.

It was the sight of the flags and awning that had brought forth the question. It was evident there was to be a dance that evening. We clustered in the gangway reading the various notices at the head of the companion-way. Why does one always do it? You may have been half an hour only on shore, yet on your return read the notices you must. Here we saw: "The games committee have decided, as the sea is so calm, to have a dance on deck this evening at 8.30." We shook our heads; but there in the saloon was tea, all ready for us in the little brown pot that cheers, and on the long crimson-covered tables stood large bunches of flowers. The sunlight twinkled on the bright brass of the ports, and the passing blue water, dancing and dimpling, reflected itself in the long white ceiling. How

TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL

nice it all seemed as the steward fetched a fresh pot of tea.

Here, I may say, I have read of the hotel porter and his many virtues, which it is an undoubted fact exist, but nowhere have I seen the steward apprised at his real worth. The praises of the steward have yet to be sung. O steward, the poet might begin, but where he would end I cannot say. Up to date I have found nothing that one steward or another could not do. So we drank tea, chatted, dressed, and dined; and by the time 8.30 came round there was nothing we could not do. All exhausted, the band finished the ball, the violin, piano, flute, and clarionet giving forth the last notes of "A life on the ocean wave" and "God save our King" as the clock struck the hour of twelve.

"We are of one tongue, though one of the two, or in some respects both, are now much changed." (*Prose Edda.*)

"Then ruled over England King Ethelred, son of Edgar (979). He was a good chief; he sat this winter in London. The tongue in England, as well as in Norway and Denmark, was then one. But it changed in England when William the Bastard won England. Thenceforth the tongue of Valland (France) was used in England, for he (William) was born there." (*Guaxlaaig Ormstunga's Saga*, c. 7.)

If we read the sagas we can trace our forefathers back to Odin the Asa king, and learn the character and life of the Norse ancestors of the English-speaking peoples. We can form a satisfactory idea of their religious, social, political, and warlike life. We can follow them from their birth to their grave; see the infant exposed to die, or water sprinkled; follow the child in his education, in his sports; the young man in

his practice of arms; the maiden in her domestic duties and embroidery; the adult in his warlike expeditions; hear the clash of swords, and the song of the scald inciting the warriors to greater deeds of daring, or it may be recounting afterwards the glorious death of the hero. We listen to the old man giving his advice at the Thing; we learn about the dress of these ancestors, their ornaments, implements, weapons; their expressive names and complicated relationships; their dwellings and convivial halls, with their primitive or magnificent furniture; their temples, sacrifices, gods, and sacred ceremonies; their personal appearance, even to the hair, eyes, face, and limbs. Their festivals, betrothal and marriage feasts are open to us. We are present at their athletic games, preparatory to the stern realities of the life of that period, where honour and renown were won on the battle-field; at the revel and drunken bout; behold the dead warrior on his burning ship, or on the pyre, surrounded by his weapons, horses, slaves, or fallen companions who are to enter with him into Valhalla.

The first metal the Norsemen knew was copper, which is found in many parts of Norway. To begin with, it was used unalloyed, for in the north many implements of pure copper have been unearthed. Gradually it was discovered that a little tin mixed with the copper made it much harder. And as bronze was far superior to stone, it no doubt superseded it in many cases. But the new metal must have been very costly, as tin had to be imported from distant countries. Stone axes were used therefore far on in the age of bronze. Gold was also worked up into all sorts of ornaments, rings, bracelets, and brooches.

Du Chaillu, who years ago introduced the gorilla to the world, wrote his book to prove the truth of the

old myth that the Scandinavian race came with Odin originally from the shores of the Black Sea, and that they brought with them the religion, the arts, and the culture of the ancient Greeks. He illustrated it with many beautiful pictures, showing what a likeness the Viking ships bore to those of Argos and Corinth. The patterns wrought by the old Norsemen were shown to be very like early classic ornament, the similarity of the rude figures chiselled in the rock to archaic carving in Asia Minor, and the likeness of the runic character to the Greek alphabet, were all worked out in the most ingenious way.

Isaac Taylor, the Dean of York, also made systematic researches into the origin of the alphabet. When he came to study the runes he suggested quite the same interpretation, and said that they were derived from Greek sources. On the other hand, Wimmer, in his great work *Die Runenschrift*, states that the runes were developed from the Latin letters in use during the second century, but it has been pointed out that the Latin was written from left to right, and it is very unlikely that a people borrowing such an alphabet would use it to write from right to left.

Hempl contends that the runes were derived about 600 B.C. from the western Greek. Taylor, however, thought they came from a Greek colony on the Black Sea, and it is well known that the early Greek was often written, as we should say, backwards. Wherever the Norse Vikings came from, there can be no doubt that they had much in common with the warrior kings of Homer's verse. The mythology of each race may be compared,—Zeus, the god of the sky, with his irresistible bolts might quite well be Thor the Thunderer under another name. His fight with the Titans has probably suggested the slaying

of the Jotun giants. The immortals, though nothing but types of contemporary human nature, have much in common. Each race believed in three sisters of fate, the gods of fire, and the under-world, besides demi-gods and heroes of all degrees.

Animal metamorphosis of the most wonderful character occurs in both mythologies. The Scandinavian cosmogonic myth gives us tales of Odin, the swift-goer, the ganger. He could deal in magic. When he stole Suttungs Mead, which answers to the classic nectar, he flew away in the shape of an eagle. One of his names is the Raven God. Asa Loki was of mixed race, half god, half giant. He changed into a mare and became the mother of the eight-legged horse of Odin. Heien is described as the long-legged one, lord of the ooze; his name suggests that of a crane. The constant enemies of the gods, the giants, could also turn themselves into animals when they wished. Havindal and Loki change themselves into seals to fight their battle. Odin's wife was Frigg, from whom we have the week day Friday. Their son was Thor, the thunder god. Thursday was his festival. He had a hammer and was a great fighter.

The gods of Norway, some of them derived from the forces of nature, and the rest indifferently represented as divine, human, or animal, are, after all, only men, and primitive men at that. The story of the pure and much-loved god Balder, who descended into Hell, seems to have been adopted later; suggested perhaps by the teaching of Christianity. The race of the gods was called Asgardr Godheimr, and that of the giants Utgardr Jötunheimr, and the bards sang Eddas of the halls of Odin, where the souls of the heroes killed in war lived for ever.

Everywhere we see that gold was in the greatest

abundance, as shown by the treasures in the museums of the north, which bear witness to the truthfulness of the records. The spade has developed the history of Scandinavia as it has done that of Assyria and Etruria; but in addition the Northmen had the Saga and Edda literature to perpetuate their deeds.

Britain, being an island, could only be settled or conquered by seafaring tribes, just in the same way as to-day distant lands can only be conquered by nations possessing ships. Unfortunately the Roman accounts of the conquest and occupation of Britain, of its population and inhabitants, are very meagre and unsatisfactory, and do not help us much to ascertain how the settlement in Britain by the people of the north began.

We find from Roman records that the so-called Saxons had founded colonies, or had settlements in Belgium and Gaul; and another important fact we know from the records relating to Britain is, that during the Roman occupation of the island the Saxons had settlements in the country, but how they came there we are not told.

In the *Notitia Dignitatum utriusque imperii*, which was a sort of catalogue or "army list" compiled towards the latter end of the fourth century, occurs the expression, "Comes litoris Saxonici per Britannias"—Count of the Saxon shore in Britain. Within this litus Saxonicum the following places are mentioned—Othona, said to be "close by Hastings"; Dubris, said to be Dover; Rutupiæ, Richborough; Branodumum, Brancaster; Regulbium, Reculvers; Lemannis, West Hythe; Garianno, Yarmouth; Anderida, Pevensey; Portus Adurni, Shoreham or Brighton. This shows that the so-called Saxons were settled in Britain before the *Notitia* was drawn up, and at a date very much

earlier than has been assigned by some modern historians.

The Skjöldunga Saga, which is often mentioned in other sagas, and which contains a record down to the early Kings of Denmark, is unfortunately lost; but from some fragments we see that several Danish and Swedish Kings claimed to have possessions in England long before the supposed coming of the Danes.

"Skjöld (Shield) was the son of Odin, from whom the Skjöldungar are descended. He dwelt in and ruled over the lands now called Danmörk, which were then called Gotland. Skjöld had a son, Fridleif, who ruled the lands after him. Fridleif's son Fródi got the kingship after his father, about the time when the Emperor Augustus made peace all over the world. Then Christ was born. As Fródi was the most powerful of all kings in the northern lands, all who spoke the Danish tongue attributed the peace to him, and the Northmen called it the peace of Fródi. Now Fródi the Valiant had two sons, Ing-jald and Hálfdán. From the first was descended the great Harald Hilditönn, who was defeated by his kinsman Sigurd Hring at the Bravalla battle. From the second was descended Harald Fairhair, the ancestor of the Dukes of Normandy, and so indirectly of Queen Victoria. "All who are truly wise in events know that the Tyrkjar and Asia-men settled in the northern lands. Then began the tongue which has since spread over all lands. The leader of these people was called Odin, and to him men trace their families." (*Staurlang's Saga.*)

The rather mythical genealogy of Ynglingatal composed for the uncle of Harald Fairhair traces the family through thirty generations up to Odin, and, being probably composed a little after 900, it would make Odin live about 100 before Christ.

Thus the Skjöldunga Branch began with—

Odin Asa King.	Fródi.	Fridleif.
Skjöld.	Vermund the Wise.	Fródi the Valiant.
Fridleif.	Olaf the Humble.	
Fridfróde.	Dan the Proud.	
Fridleif.	Fródi the Peaceful.	
Hávar the Hand-strong.		

Ingjal.	Hálfdán.	
Hrœrek Ringeng-gard.	Helgi.	
Fródi.	Hrolf Kraki.	
Hálfdán.	Hróar.	
Hrœrek Ring-thrower.	Valdar the Mild.	
Harald Hilditönn.	Harald the Old.	
	Hálfdán the Valiant.	
	Ivar Vidfadmi.	
	Aud, the Deep-minded *m.*	1. Hrœrek Ring-thrower.
		2. Randbard.

Randver.	Aslang.
Sigurd Hring.	Sigurd Hart.
Ragnar Lodbrok.	Ragnhild.
Sigurd Snake-eye.	Harald Fairhair.

	Reigned A.D.
Harald Fairhair . .	860–930
Eirik Bloodaxe . .	930–934
Hakon the Good . .	934–960
Harald Grafeld (Grey skin) . . .	960–965
Olaf Tryggvason . .	965–995
Hakon Jarl the Great .	995–1000
Eirik Jarl . . .	1000–1015
St. Olaf . . .	1015–1028

	Reigned A.D.
Knut the Great . .	1028–1035
Magnus the Good .	1035–1047
Harald Hardradi . .	1047–1066
Olaf "the Peaceful" Kyeri . . .	1066–1093
Magnus Barefoot . . (Three sons—Eystein, Olaf, Sigurd.)	1093–1103
Jársalafari . . .	1103–1130
Civil War—Harald Gilli, Magnus the Blind, and others . .	1130–1162
Magnus Erlingsson .	1162–1184
Civil Wars . . .	1184–1217
Haakon Haakonssön .	1217–1263
Magnus Lagaböter .	1263–1280
Eric Magnussön . .	1280–1299
Haakon Magnussön . (No male issue)	1299–1319

Transition to the Union: Magnus Smek, by Ingeborg Haakon's daughter and the Swedish Duke Eric 1319

Harald Harfagre, or Fair-Haired Harald, also called Lufa, or the Thick-Haired, was born about the year 850, and was the son of Hálfdán the Black, King of Upland, an inconsiderable district in Norway. By the mother's side he was descended from Ragnar Ladbrok and the renowned Siguard the Serpent-killer. When he was ten years of age his father died, and he became King of the little district of Upland. For some years his affairs were managed by Guthorus, his mother's brother, but when he was about eighteen he took everything into his own hands. Harald was tall and athletic,—of an exceedingly handsome countenance, bold and daring, and of a mind of great ambition. At that time there was no universal King in Norway, almost every district being governed by its own petty sovereign or headman, under whom the people enjoyed their othul, or right of the soil, merely paying a slight tribute to the ruler.

This state of things, however, was not destined to continue. No sooner had Harald become his own master than he made a vow to Odin that he would neither cut nor comb his hair till he had made himself sole King of the country, and absolute lord of the lives and property of the inhabitants.

Harald Harfagre had first to secure the kingdom he had inherited from his father, and thereupon crossed the Dovre Mountains to Trondhjem, where he took up his abode in this well-populated community. All this he accomplished in a few years by dauntless bravery, force of character, and terrible severity. In some instances he experienced a desperate resistance, but he never lost a battle. His hardest conflict was the sea fight at Hafirsfirth, in which he encountered several confederated kings. In this he was hard pressed, and would probably have

been worsted but for the fall of Haklangr, or Longehin, the principal leader of the opposite party, a man of great courage and immense strength. This battle was decisive, for after it Harald was sole master of Norway, from the inhabitants of which he took their cherished othul, reducing them to the condition of bondsmen or servants. Harald was satisfied with being King of Norway, but the effects of what he did were by no means confined to that country.

Perhaps the actions of few or none have had so much influence on the affairs of Europe as those of Harald Harfagre. He was the principal cause and originator of what may be called the Norman March. Terra Northmannorum, occupied in the early part of the tenth century by the Northmen, whose name was on Gaelic soil gradually changed to Norman Rollo or Rolf, settled at Rouen, embraced Christianity, and became the Carlovingian King's man. The Viking leader received a grant from Charles the Simple of all the land between Dive and the River Epte. He was called "Princeps Northmannorum," or sometimes "Dux piratarum."

A nobility gradually sprang up consisting chiefly, it would seem, of those who could claim any kind of kindred, legitimate or illegitimate, with the ducal house. Some of the greatest Norman houses sprang from kinsfolk of wives or mistresses of the dukes, who were themselves of very low degree. The Cotentin with the Channel Islands seems to have been added in the time of the second duke, William Longsword, about 927. It appears that though the East Normans were Christians and spoke French, the coast folk were mostly heathen and Scandinavian.

Richard the Fearless was the son of William by a Breton mother, who stood in the doubtful relationship

called a Danish marriage. He reigned fifty years, then there came a second, and a third Richard, and then a Robert who was the father of our William the Conqueror.

The Viking Rolf Ganger, the founder of the Norman settlement, was one of that magnificent race of men of the old North whom popular histories include in the common name of Danes. They replunged into barbarism the nations over which they swept; but from their barbarism they reproduced the noblest elements of civilisation, and were wonderfully pliable and malleable in their admixtures with the peoples they overran. Frankes, the Archbishop, baptized Rolf Ganger, and this is the reason why the Normans lost their old names in their conversion to Christianity.

Thus Charles the Simple insists that Rolf Ganger shall change his creed and his name, and Rolf or Rou is christened Robert, and within a little more than a century afterwards the descendants of these terrible heathens, who had spared neither priest nor altar, were the most redoubtable defenders of the Christian Church,—their old language forgotten save by a few in the town of Bayeux, their ancestral names save amongst a few of the noblest changed into French. And all the while in my head runs "The Ballad of Rou"—

"From Blois to Senlis, wave by wave, roll'd on the Norman flood,
And Frank on Frank went drifting down the weltering tide of blood.
There was not left in all the land a castle wall to fire,
And not a wife but wailed a lord, a child but mourned a sire.
To Charles the King, the mitred monks, the mailed Barons flew,
While, shaking earth, behind them strode the thunder march of Rou.

'O King,' then cried these Barons bold, 'in vain are mace and mail,
We fall before the Norman axe, as corn before the hail.'
'And vainly,' cried the pious monks, 'by Mary's shrine we kneel,
For prayers, like arrows, glance aside against the Norman steel.'
The Barons groaned, the shavelings wept, while near and nearer drew,
As death-birds round their scented feast, the raven flags of Rou. . . .

Psalm-chanting came the shaven monks, within the camp of dread;
Amidst his warriors, Norman Rou stood taller by the head;
Out spoke the Frank Archbishop then, a priest devout and sage:
'When peace and plenty wait thy word, what need of war and rage?
Why waste a land as fair as aught beneath the arch of blue,
Which might be thine to sow and reap?' thus saith the King to Rou.

'I'll give thee all the ocean coast, from Michael Mount to Eure,
And Gille, my fairest child, as bride, to bind thee fast and sure;
If thou but kneel to Christ our God, and sheathe thy paynim sword,
And hold thy land, the Church's son, a fief from Charles thy lord.'
The Norman on his warriors looked—to counsel they withdrew;
The saints took pity on the Franks, and moved the soul of Rou.

So back he strode and thus he spoke to that Archbishop meek:
'I take the land thy King bestows, from Eure to Michael-peak,
I take the maid, foul or fair, a bargain with the coast;
And for thy creed, a sea-king's gods are those that give the most,—
So hie thee back and tell thy chief to make his proffer true,
And he shall find a docile son, and ye a saint in Rou.

So o'er the border stream of Epte came Rou the Norman, where,
Begirt with Barons, sat the King, enthroned at green St. Clair;
He placed his hand in Charles' hand,—loud shouted all the throng,
But tears were in King Charles' eyes,—the grip of Rou was strong.
'Now kiss the foot,' the Bishop said,—'that homage still is due';
Then dark the frown and stern the smile of that grim convert, Rou.

He takes the foot, as if the foot to slavish lips to bring:
The Normans scowl, he tilts the throne, and backwards falls the King.
Loud laugh the joyous Norman men—pale stare the Franks aghast;
And Rou lifts up his head as from the wind springs up the mast:
'I said I would adore a God, but not a mortal too,
The foot that fled before a foe let cowards kiss!' said Rou."

The people of Norway in general submitted to the sway of Harald, and several of the petty Kings were glad to become his earls and land-warders, but there were proud, indomitable spirits both amongst the peasants and the chieftains who disdained to be enthralled by him. Many repaired to Iceland, which had been discovered by one Gardr at an early period of his reign, and colonised it; others betook themselves to the Faroe and the Shetland and Orkney Isles, where they formed piratical establishments; others to the Sotherics and Isle of Man, of all which islands they became masters —thousands went to Ireland, where they founded Dublin. Immense numbers, too, to that part of England which is north of the Humber, which they entirely took possession of. The élite, however, of the discontented Norsemen repaired to France, a part of which they conquered and occupied, and named after themselves Normandy, or the

land of the Normans, where, from the relations which they formed with the women of the country, a race sprang up which in course of time subdued England, Naples, and Sicily, giving kings of the Norman race to all three.

Harald's life after he had become monarch was tolerably tranquil. Any insurrections against him he speedily put down by means of his hirdlid,—an armed force which he always kept about him, consisting of about four hundred of the tallest and strongest fellows whom he could induce to serve him. To these he was very liberal in clothes, bracelets, armour, and coin; but it was said of him, during his life and long after his death, that though he was free of gold he was rather stingy of meat. He had several places of residence, but his favourite one was Rogaland in Utstein.

He married Ragnhilda, daughter of the King of Jutland. By this Ragnhilda he had Eirik, surnamed Blood-axe, from his desperate deeds in war, to whom he bequeathed the sceptre of Norway at his death. He lived and died a believer in the religion of Odin, Thor, and Frey—a religion of blood and horror—the votaries of which held two great festivals in the year, one at Yule or Midwinter, and the other at Haust or Harvest, at which they drank ale and ate horse flesh in honour of the gods. He was very fond of poetry, and generally had several skalds about him, who sang his praises in alliterative verse The achievement of Harald Harfagre made itself apparent in the growing consciousness in the mind of the nation that it constituted one people.

He died at the age of eighty-three, after having been King seventy-three years, and absolute sovereign of Norway about fifty-eight. He was a contemporary of Alfred the Great, his son Edward, and his grandson

Athelstane, to the last of whom he sent his son Haakon to be fostered. This child, born to him in his old age, and who eventually became King of Norway, was the first Christian ruler of that country.

Erik Blodöks (Bloody-axe) reigned but a short time, having to yield the throne to his youngest brother Haakon, who had been brought up in England by King Athelstane, and was supported by the Trönders.

"Haakon was a good Christian when he came to Norway; but as all the land was heathen, and there was much sacrificing and many chiefs, and he much needed the help and friendship of the people, he decided to conceal his Christianity, and kept Sundays, and fasting on Fridays, and the greatest festivals. He made it a law that the Yule should begin at the same time as that of the Christians, and that every man should have a certain measure of ale or pay a fine, and keep the days holy while Yule lasted. It formerly began on the mid-winter night, and it was kept for three nights. He wanted to make the people Christians when he got established in the land and had fully subjected it to himself. He sent to England for a bishop and other priests. When they came to Norway, Haakon made known that he would try to Christianise the land." (*Haakon the Good's Saga: Fornmanna Sögur*, i.)

Haakon's reign was marked by a series of meritorious reforms. The old Thing Association of the Trönders was extended by the union with it of several shires; and the common Thing place was now removed to Frosta. The Örething, however, continued to exist as well, and it came to have a special importance as the place where the oath of allegiance to the Norwegian Kings was taken. The defence of the country was also now organised by the imposition of a levy which obliged

the yeomen in the coast districts to equip and man warships. Haakon, who was honoured by his people with the surname of The Good, fell in 961 while defending his country against the sons of Erik Blodöks. After the brothers had governed cruelly for nine years the eldest of them, Harald Graafeld (Greyskin), was assassinated in Denmark, whereupon the others were obliged to yield to Earl Haakon, chief of the Trönders. Baptized under compulsion, he remained a fanatical heathen, and by cruelty alienated the affections of his people. They rose against him, and he was murdered, while fleeing, by a thrall who accompanied him.

Just at this time came Olaf Tryggvason, a descendant of Harald Harfagre, who was immediately chosen King by the Trönders. Olaf is one of the most brilliant figures in Norwegian history; after a romantic boyhood he had distinguished himself as leader of a Viking army that had ravaged England. Immediately before his coming to Norway he had embraced Christianity, and now, after becoming King of the country, he began to enforce the adoption of the Christian faith; but this was done in many cases by fear and cruelty, as Olaf Tryggvason's Saga shows.

"Olaf Tryggvason and Bishop Sigurd both went with many warships to Godey (God isle), where Rand the Strong, a man of sacrifices, lived. Olaf attacked the loft where Rand slept, and broke it and went in. Rand was taken and tied, and of the men there, some were killed and others taken. Rand was led before the King, who bade him let himself be baptized. 'Then,' said the King, 'I will not take thy property, but be thy friend, if thou wilt do this.' Rand cried out against this, and said he never would believe in Christ, and blasphemed much. The King grew angry,

and said Rand should die the most hideous death. He had him taken out and lashed to a beam, a stick was placed between his teeth to force open his mouth in which a snake was placed; but it would not go in, and recoiled, because he blew against it. Then the King had a stalk of angelica put in Rand's mouth, with the snake in it; he had a red-hot bar put on the outside of it. The snake recoiled into the mouth of Rand, and down his throat, and ate its way out of his side, and Rand died. The King took thence a large quantity of gold and silver and other loose property, weapons, and many costly things. He had slain or tortured all those of Rand's men who would not be baptized" (c. 87). The Halfred Saga also shows how hard it was for some men to give up the old faith. Halfred, who had been baptized, asked King Olaf Tryggvason to hear a song, which at first the King declined to do, as too heathen for him, but relenting, Halfred sang—

"Of yore I worshipped well
Him the bold-minded,
Lord of Hlidskjalf (Odin),
The luck of men changes."

The King said: "This is a very bad stanza; thou must improve it."

"Every kindred has made songs
To win the love of Odin;
I remember the songs
Of the men of our time.

But because I love Christ
I must hate against my will
The first husband of Frigg (Odin),
For his power I liked well."

The King replied: "The gods dwell much in thy mind, and I do not like it."

"Enricher of men, I forsake
The god-name of the raven-worshipper,
Who in heathendom performed
A trick praised by the people."

"This makes it no better; make a stanza to mend this."

"Fry and Freyja and the strong Thor
Ought to be angry with me;
I forsake the offspring of Njörd,
The angry (gods) may be friends with Grimmir (Odin).

I will call on Christ, for all love
The only Father and God;
The anger of the son I dislike:
He is the famous ruler of earth."

"This is a good song, and better than none; sing more."

"It is the custom with the Sygna King
To forbid sacrifices;
We must shun most of
The time-honoured dooms of the Norner;

All men throw
The kindred of Odin to the winds;
Now I am forced to pray to Christ,
And leave the offspring of Njörd."

The conversion to Christianity did not always have a softening influence. Thus Olaf had in the course of a few years, in true Viking fashion, brought the population of the entire coast, from Viken up to the borders of Finmarken, under the dominion of "the white Christ." Olaf was attacked by an army of superior force that had been gathered against him by Earl Haakon's son,

Erik, the Swedish King Olaf Skotkonung, and the Danish King Svend Tjugeskaeg. His men were nearly all killed, and he himself, mortally wounded, sought a grave beneath the waves. Norway was then divided between the Danish and Swedish Kings and Earl Erik; but the Kings gave up their shares to Erik and his brother Svein, who governed them as their vassals.

When the Danish King Knut the Great went to invade England he called upon Earl Erik to help him. The Earl obeyed, and never saw Norway again. In the spring of 1015 Olaf Haraldssön, a descendant of Harald Harfagre, returned to Norway from a Viking expedition. He determined to carry on the life-work of his kinsman, Olaf Tryggvason, and here in Trondhjem homage was done to him as King of Norway.

Olaf brought the little Upland Kings under the Norwegian dominion, and sought in every way to place the long-inherited power of the great chieftains under that of the King. But by his hard-handed policy Olaf Haraldssön soon aroused a strong opposition against himself. The rebels sought the aid of the Danish King Knut the Great, who came with an army to Norway in 1028 and received homage at Örething. Olaf fled to Russia, and when, some time after, he attempted to win back his kingdom he was slain by the chieftains at Stiklestad in Vardalen in July 1030. Not long after he was regarded as a holy man. This saint was a most ruthless persecutor of his forefathers' faith, and a most unqualified practical assertor of his heathen privilege. And he extended his domestic affections beyond the severe pale which should have confined them to a single wife. He died as he had wished to die, with the soothing conviction that the Valkyrs would bear him to Valhalla. One wonders if Saint Olaf was not really heathen after all.

It is not without reason that the century which now followed, after Olaf's son Magnus had ascended the throne in 1035, has been called the period of Norway's greatness. The kingdom was now, by the unity brought about between the royal power and the aristocracy, enabled to extend its influence to the world around. Magnus became also by inheritance King of Denmark, but after his death that kingdom passed into the hands of Svend Estridsson, although Magnus's successor Harald Haardrada, brother to Olaf the Holy, laid claim to it by force of arms.

Snorro Sturleson gives us a noble and spirited reply of the Confessor to Magnus, who as heir of Knut claimed the English crown. It concludes thus: "Now, he (Hardicanute) died, and then it was the resolution of all the people of the country to take me for the King here in England. So long as I had no kingly title I served my superiors in all respects like those who had no claims by birth to land or kingdom. Now, however, I have received the kingly title, and am consecrated King; I have established my royal dignity and authority, as my father before me; and while I live I will not renounce my title. If King Magnus comes here with an army, I will gather no army against him, but he shall only get the opportunity of taking England when he has taken my life. Tell him these words of mine."

True hero of the North, true darling of war and of song was Harald Haardrada! At the terrible battle of Stiklestad at which his brother St. Olaf was killed, he was but fifteen, but his body was covered with the wounds of a veteran. He lay concealed in the house of a Bonder peasant, remote in deep forests, till his wounds were healed. Chanting by the way, he went on into Sweden,

thence into Russia, and, after wild adventures in the East, joined, with the bold troop he had collected round him, that famous bodyguard of the Greek emperors called the Vaeringers, of which he became the chief.

Jealousies between himself and the Greek General of the imperial forces ended in Harald's retirement with his Vaeringers into the Saracen land of Africa. Eighty castles stormed and taken, vast plunder in gold and jewels, and nobler meed in the song of the scald and the praise of the brave attested the prowess of the great Scandinavian. New laurels awaited him in Sicily. Rough foretype of the coming crusader, he passed on to Jerusalem. He bathed in Jordan, and knelt at the Holy Cross. Returning to Constantinople, the desire for his northern home seized him. There he heard that Magnus, the illegitimate son of St. Olaf, had become King of Norway. He sailed home to the North, and after such feats as became a sea king of old received half of Norway from Magnus, on whose death the whole of the kingdom passed to his sway.

This was the King to whom came Tostig the Earl, with the offer of England's crown. This was the man to whom our English Harald offered seven feet of land for a grave, "or as much more as his stature exceeding that of other men might require." Harald Haardrada died at Stamford Bridge. In his death died the last hope of the Vikings, and the bones of the invaders whitened the field of battle for many years afterwards.

The efforts of his grandson Magnus, nicknamed Barefoot, were directed towards the amalgamation of the Norwegian settlements on the islands off the coast of Scotland and others into one kingdom. Magnus fell during a descent upon Ireland. A few years after-

wards his son Sigurd set off on a crusade to the Holy Land, where in 1110 he took the strong town of Sidon.

It was during the reigns of the peaceful kings Olaf Kyree and Eystein Magnusson that Bergen was founded as a centre for trade with England.

After Sigurd's death in 1130 came a period of a hundred and ten years, that was occupied with fights amongst the descendants of Magnus Barefoot's sons, fostered and encouraged at one time by the aristocracy, at another by the clergy, more especially Archbishop Eystein, who had so much to do in the building of the cathedral: it was a question of Church against Crown.

In 1164 Magnus Erlingsson, who was then a child, had been crowned by the Archbishop, after his father, the chieftain Erling Skakke, had promised on his behalf that the kingdom should be subject to St. Olaf, and that after the King's death the crown should be given as an offering to that saint. At the same time a change was made in the public law of the kingdom, which would have given the Bishop the power to nominate the future King. After Eystein's death his successor continued the struggle, but King Sverre compelled him to leave the country. The King in return was put under the Pope's ban. During the struggle King Sverre died, and it was his grandson, Haakon Haakonssön, who became King in 1217, and crushed the faction raised by the clergy.

Then again Norway throve and flourished for another eighty years, during Haakon's reign and that of his son Magnus Lagaboter (the Law Mender) and his sons Eirik and Haakon. To the latter the French King Louis IX. offered the supreme command in a crusade. Iceland and Greenland also became subject to his

dominion. He died during the winter in the Orkneys, when the Scottish King attacked the Hebrides in 1263.

Haakon v. succeeded him in 1299, and at his death the male descendants of Harald Harfagre became extinct. The daughter of Haakon Magnusson married a Swedish duke, Erik, and her son Magnus Smek was elected King of Sweden as well as Norway in 1319. Denmark was joined to the two kingdoms in 1395 by the election of Erik.

Troublous times then came to the North. The Germans practically ruled the commerce of the country, and in other matters also had the game in their own hands. Fresh misfortunes in the shape of plague and death overtook them in 1349, 1360, and 1371. From 1397 to 1450 Norway played a subordinate part, while yet continuing to be an independent kingdom.

King Christian III., after the *coup d'etat* in 1536, promised much, but did little. One thing, however, which he did remains good to this day. This was the Norwegian naval defence, which was organised by royal command and kept up. In 1628, supported by the old regulations regarding the military defence of the country, there was further established a national standing army.

Under Christian IV. Norway was once more aroused to an independent existence by the rapidly growing prosperity of trade; but in 1658, by the cession of the district of Trondhjem owing to the unhappy wars waged with Sweden, when several of the best districts had to be relinquished, her condition was almost total dissolution.

The Norwegian laws of Christian V. improved the situation. Two wars—the Gyldenlone War, 1675–1679,

and the great Northern War, 1709-1720—in which the young and intrepid naval hero, Peter Wessel, who was raised to the nobility under the name of Tordenskjold, won great renown, shed a lustre over army and fleet.

After 1720 its prosperity grew continually. New towns sprang up and the population increased. An armed neutrality was concluded with Sweden and Russia, and under its protection trade and navigation attained a hitherto unknown level. Then came a brief war with England, and the battle of Copenhagen was fought. The British captured the Dano-Norwegian fleet and plundered the dockyards, and it was English action which drove the Crown Prince into the arms of Napoleon. No grudge seems to be felt about it now. The Norwegian greets one as a friend, and his handshake is as cordial as though we had never been foes.

In 1814 the Powers compelled Denmark to cede Norway to Sweden. At that time the Norwegian Diet elected as King of Norway the Danish Prince who was acting as Viceroy, and voted a Constitution. Bernadotte, Crown Prince of Sweden, invaded Norway, and war thus began; but as the Great Powers were all against Norway, the Danish Prince resigned the throne, and the Diet accepted the arrangement made by the Powers, but induced the King of Sweden to accept its Constitution. The two countries from that time each had its own Constitution and Government, but a common sovereign had control in matters of war and diplomacy.

Bernadotte, when he succeeded to the throne, found himself in constant conflict with the Norwegian Diet, a conflict in which the Diet in the long run was successful.

He dissolved the Storthing or Diet, which was held by the Norwegians to be an unconstitutional act, and opposed

the abolition of the nobility, which the Storthing voted three times at intervals of three years, the method laid down by the Constitution for legislation, in despite of the royal veto.

In 1869 the session of the Storthing was made annual, and in 1872, on the accession of King Oscar II., a constitutional conflict began which was in due time to become national rather than constitutional. The substance of the dispute was over the responsibility of the Ministers to the Storthing. The Bill by which they were admitted to its sessions was passed the three necessary times, but in each case vetoed by the King. The Storthing then impeached the Ministers for advising the King to refuse his sanction to an amendment of the Constitution which had duly become law. The Ministers were found guilty and dismissed, and at length the King invited the leader of the majority in the Storthing to form a Ministry. This was in 1884. It established in Norway the constitutional principle and practice which prevailed in Great Britain.

Seven years later began the nationalist movement for the creation of a Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the appointment of Norwegian Consuls. How the dispute on these matters developed until it led to the separation of the two countries and the independence of Norway is fresh in every one's recollection.

After the agreement for the separation of the two countries had been confirmed the proposal to offer the Norwegian Crown to Prince Charles of Denmark was submitted to a popular vote, with the result that on Friday, 17th November, 259,563 votes were recorded in favour of the proposal, and only 69,264 against it. So on Saturday the Storthing met, and by a unanimous vote elected Prince Charles,

King Haakon is the constitutional King of the most democratic country in Europe. Its population of two and a quarter millions is about the same number as that of the kingdom of Greece, and is mainly composed of peasants owning their own land—merchants, traders, workmen, and sailors. Though the country is not rich it is prosperous, its annual expenditure being only about five millions sterling.

The Norwegians have in proportion to population the most highly developed mercantile marine in the world, and in actual tonnage the fourth, it being surpassed only by those of Great Britain, the United States, and Germany. The people are well educated, having compulsory elementary education to the age of fourteen. Their country's history is that of enterprise and manliness from the time of the earliest records. To be the freely chosen king of such a people is an honour of which any prince in the world might be proud.

Doctor Nansen has been appointed the first Norwegian Minister to the Court of St. James's. Doctor Nansen has played a prominent part in the affairs of Norway since he returned from his trip "Farthest North." His views on recent events are indicated in a letter which he wrote last April: "Norway's course is clear ahead; we value an intimate and sincere friendship, and a strong union with the Swedish people, but we value even more highly our independence and our sovereignty as it is assured us by our Constitution and by the Treaty of Union."

In 1814 a fundamental law was passed in which military service was declared to be universal and personal. After the union with Sweden, however, a great reduction was made in the army, and most of the fortifications were vacated. The present complete organisation only goes back to the Conscription Act of 1885.

Every able-bodied Norwegian, except he be a member of the clergy or a pilot, is liable to service, and may be employed in any position for which he is best suited. Seamen and fishermen serve in the Navy, artisans as far as possible in their own departments, students in medicine serve in field hospitals, and the countrymen used to horses go into the cavalry. Men are enrolled when they are twenty-two, and they are on the army list for sixteen years. First there is six years in the line, the first year of which the infantry recruit does forty-eight days' drill and twenty-four days' battalion exercise. In the following years this is continued, so that the total training lasts nearly five months spread over four years. The cavalry man serves nearly seven months and the engineer six, spread over five years. Then comes the second term of six years in the landwern, with much fewer drills; and last, there is a term of four years in the landstorm. These three classes are called opbuds; they are all of equal strength, having the same number of battalions, squadrons, etc. According to the fundamental law, the line only can be employed outside the country. The training is not carried on in the barrack square, but in camps of exercise spread over the different districts in summer time. The annual number of recruits to the army is about 11,000, and Norway is able to raise by mobilisation: the line army about 26,000 men for service abroad; the militia army of more than 25,000; and last, the landstorm 25,000; coast artillery, 4500. So that altogether there are about 80,000 men ready to defend their own country.

In April 1906 the Norwegian Government decided to bring in a Bill for the organisation of a new army, and an estimate amounting to 12,541,000 kroner (£696,720) for this purpose. The proposed legislation provided that

FROKOST (BREAKFAST)

GUSTAV WENTZEL

the troops of the line should be composed of twelve annual levies of militia and of six annual levies, as compared with the present four, of all other men from eighteen to fifty years of age who are capable of bearing arms. In the new militia the old regimental division will be reintroduced, each regiment having three battalions. The troops of the line will consist of fourteen regiments, and the cavalry will be composed of fifteen squadrons. The mountain artillery will be transferred to Tromsö. The length of service will be unchanged. New gendarmerie and scouting corps will also be established for service in peace time. Mr. Dahl, the son of the painter at Balholm, was doing his course in the army when I met him, and I am indebted to his kindness for the details here given.

CHAPTER XII

TORGHATTEN—MRS PILOT—NARVIK—LOFOTENS —TROMSÖ AND LYNGEN

THE lunch bugle had sounded, all were in their places, when the word went round that Torghatten was nearly abreast. One by one we left our seats, with a little deprecating glance at the steward, who, we well knew, would stand patiently till our return, and he, poor fellow, at the same time realising that he would sit down late to his own dinner. Passengers are selfish people in the main, but after all there is only one Torghatten, with an opening 407 feet above the sea, 535 feet long, and about 40 broad, the daylight visible clear through the body of the mountain. Pontoppidan, who evidently wore magnifying glasses when measuring sea serpents, must have had the same pair on when gazing at Torghatten, as he states that it is 6000 feet long and 300 feet high—a slight difference from Baedeker's computation.

We waited what seemed a long time before the first little streak of daylight became visible through the great hat-shaped rock. "There! there! do you see, close to that light patch." "No, not there—you see that black streak, well, just by the black streak comes a lighter patch, well there." "Yes, I see!" Slowly the aperture widened till it looked as if a great bullet had passed straight through, leaving a round hole of daylight.

Beyond this the scenery of the coast is magnificent, great chains of mountains rise with craggy peaks and snowy sides.

The Seven Sisters still stand in a row petrified with horror at the fate of their cousin the fair Jutala, her brother, and her lover the mounted Hestmann. He has his martial cloak thrown round him, and now marks the crossing of the Arctic circle. I did not know the story when we passed, but since then have come across a sailor's yarn, which may be believed or not as the reader likes best. "One day a young 'jutal,' or devil-kin, living in the neighbourhood took a fancy to visit his Seven Sisters, unluckily for them all; a distant cousin, whose home was on an island farther south, was staying with them at the time.

"As is usual on such occasions, the two young people fell desperately in love with each other, and, as is also usual, vowed eternal fidelity. Business of importance called the giant home. His fair cousin returned also to attend on a sick brother. With tears and vows and many protestations they mutually tore themselves asunder, and the Seven Sisters found the poor lady swooning on the shore from which her lover had departed. She went home to her sick brother and nursed him tenderly, and, finding him in gentle mood, made him her confidant, and he agreed that she should marry the jutal of her choice. On his recovery his perverse nature re-gained its wonted sway. He determined that his sister should wed a dissolute companion of his, whom she hated.

"Now you must know that every jutal family had some special power or malignant charm by which to battle with their enemies. The speciality of this family was petrifaction. The cruel brother exercised that power on the lover's messengers, and turned them all into rocks.

Now, the devilkin was not aware of this brother's existence, the fair giantess having concealed the fact on account of his extravagant habits. Believing thus that his plighted one was the last of her race, and that she alone possessed the power of petrifaction, he concluded she had put the stony insult on him. Mounting his steed, and shouldering his crossbow, he shot a heavy bolt at the dwelling of the jutaless. His special power was an unerring aim. Her brother was bathing at the time, and it being a very wet morning, he wore his sou'-wester, others say his market hat. The bolt sped through seventy miles of air, passed through the hat of the treacherous jutal, and, carrying away a portion of his skull, fell at his fair one's feet. She knew the bolt, and that none but he could have shot it. She saw her brother sinking beneath the waves, never to rise again. All that remained of him for her loving eyes to gaze upon was his perforated hat floating on the waters. She thought of the perfidy of the lover she believed so true, and her heart was broken; but as she died she exercised her power of petrifaction. Her lover and the horse he rode, herself, and the floating hat she turned to stone."

Those who doubt the foregoing should go to the spot. There is the mounted Hestmann, there is the perforated sou'-wester, and beyond it the drooping fair one, all turned to stone. There are the messengers, a long procession of low rocky islands, reaching from the Hestmann to his love, and there are the Seven Sisters in stony stillness looking on.

As we steam along the coast the great inland chain of snowy mountains comes in view. The valleys, descending, can be seen, with a telescope, filled with glaciers, from the Svartisen above. This is an enormous expanse

of snow and ice, resembling the Justedal and the Folgefond. Svartisen covers a plateau about 4000 feet in height.

Then on we went, by a smiling island, where Captain Thompson, who is nothing if not kind, slowed, as a homestead came in view. A big white farmhouse, with outbuildings, stood in some acres of the greenest of grass, with a little pier jutting into the water, alongside of which lay a boat. From afar, as we threaded our way up the fjord, the pilot had had his glasses turned on this spot, that was home to him. The steamer's great throttle sent out a mighty hoot. No one appeared. The next hoot brought a boy to the pier, who let go the boat's painter; and the third hoot brought Madam herself, hastily buttoning her bodice. She was a stout lady, fair-haired and comely. Our captain shook his head as he remarked, "I won't wait for her another time. A year ago now, when I first slowed, she was waiting in mid-stream. The next, she was just coming down the jetty; and this time I have had to wait. I won't wait again, I can tell her."

The meeting did not seem to move the pilot much; I felt as though we should not look. The moment the boat was alongside, the pilot had climbed down the Jacob's ladder, and with a spring was on board, stooping to kiss the small child. She pulled her face away. He desisted at once, took his wife's hand and said a few words to her, with his eyes fixed on her face. One hand-shake, and he was again on the ladder. The small boy pulled off, and poor Madam, shading her eyes with one hand, waved the other. This was all, after six months' separation!

The Lofotens, the group of islands we were now approaching, lie somewhat to the north of the polar

circle, and consist of eruptive rocks. Only a few years ago it was found that the islands were not only granite and syenite, as was believed, but that they were formed to a great extent of gabbro and kindred rocks.

Towards midnight the sky that had been gradually getting yellow seemed to glow. Shade after shade, each more intense than the other, followed, till the whole heaven was a vivid flame colour reddening as it neared the peaks. The effect was glorious. Out of a blue mist that hung along the sea rose the grandest cluster of rugged granite. The mountains sprang up like a range of phantoms 3000 to 4000 feet high, breaking at their summits into countless multitudes of jagged points. They looked like some great shark's jaw, of a bluish tint at first, which gradually darkened, till the whole was a black silhouette against the glowing sky.

Passing through these Lofoten Islands, rising out of the sea on one side, and the mighty mountain ranges of the mainland on the other, was like steaming right into the grandest fairy tales of the people, more especially when the glow of the midnight sun suffused with infinite splendour those parts of the mountain on which it rested, leaving the other parts in an inexpressible chill.

This is one picturesque side of the Lofotens, the background to the mighty fishing industry that costs more lives every year than if the country was in the midst of war. To us, the suffering and privations, the roughness of the living, and the cold of the water, would seem hardships indeed; but the Norseman has won his adjective of "hardy." From near and far he drifts to the fishing grounds, where, when all is said and done, he makes but a poor living, earning but

LOFOTEN ISLANDS

1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. a day. For that he must catch some four hundred cod to make what is considered a good day's fishing; this for a net and boat with two hands. A line fisherman considers he has done well if his catch amounts to two hundred. All along the shore are the boat stations, havens with the necessary buildings and stores. Lodgings are scarce for the men, who during the first few months of the year number some 40,000. Think what it must be to sleep standing back to back, like herring in a barrel, in a close, stifling atmosphere. Sometimes not even able to get that amount of accommodation, the poor fellows have to walk back to their open boats, their clothes frozen stiff. Covering themselves with what odds and ends they can find, they sleep, as only an overtired man can. Small wonder that many a man and lad catches his death of cold.

It seems to me that, like the lemming, these fishermen cannot keep away from the call of the sea. Some prosaic people say that it is the hope of great and immediate profit that carries them through all discomforts and dangers, and tempts generation after generation to follow on the same path. I would rather be let to think that it is the same call from the sea that their Viking forefathers obeyed for centuries.

Not so very long ago they used to sail all the way from their land-girt fjords to the great fishing ground. Now boat and crew go by steamer, and once on board the merry, exciting life begins. They meet friends and comrades at the different stations, where old stories are told and re-told, and old times revived by lively briny conversation. Card-playing, betting and drinking take place, and many dances with the girls, who on Sundays come long distances for a swing round. These join

the lasses who are employed gutting the fish. One excellent rule obtains amongst these men. The best man on board is chosen as skipper, never mind what his status may be on shore, whether master or servant. Even should the owner of the boat and gear accompany it as one of the crew, he, like everyone else, is bound to obey the skipper, who steers the boat and superintends the fishing.

Up to a few years ago, the fishing was principally carried on in open boats, but every year now sees decked boats and smacks used in the deep-sea fishing. In the newer boats the men can live on board, and find shelter in the cabins. Acres and acres of rock are covered with the split fish lying out to dry in the sun, with here and there a stack ready for shipment. A queer harvest it looks, that might easily be mistaken for hayricks at a distance. Near to these stacks, and drying acres, are huge boilers where the cod-livers stew most odoriferously. The sight of the day is to see the boats push off to sea and return in the evening. Assembled in their hundreds, the men are as busy as bees with their fishing tackle and gear awaiting the signal. As soon as this is given they all push out to sea together, for the various fishing grounds.

The preparation of salting cod was introduced by English merchants in the seventeenth century, and gradually outstripped the ancient product Törfisk. The Klipfisk is split, salted, and dried on the ground. Törfisk are gutted and hung in pairs by the tail, and dried on wooden scaffolds called "hjell," seen continually by the sides of the fjords. According to ancient rules, no fish was to be hung on the hurdles before the 12th of April, or taken down before the 12th of June.

Just to give an idea of the quantity of dried fish

SCENE IN THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS

OTTO SINDING

exported, I quote one year's total from the official publication:—

KLIPFISK

To Spain	28,450 tons
„ Germany	8,720 „
„ Great Britain and Ireland	5,620 „
„ Italy	1,940 „
„ Portugal and Madeira	2,450 „

TÖRFISK

To Sweden	2,320 tons
„ Italy and Austria	4,950 „
„ Holland	3,500 „
„ Germany	3,280 „
„ Great Britain and Ireland	2,730 „
„ Russia and Finland	850 „
„ Belgium	170 „

The weather, I think it must have been, that had entered into the soul, and accounted for the sense of rest and beauty that enveloped the world this perfect morning. The air was gentle and warm, the sun was shining on the beautiful white decks and the ship just gliding through the glass-like water. There were no more dark fjords with wall-like mountains. A broad stretch of water lay shimmering before us; the mountains receded in the distance, their hollows, crannies, and snows covered by a pale blue haze; while the green undulating land was more like our own rolling downs. Add to this a pair of blue-tinted spectacles through which Nature was looking this fair morning. Blue sky, blue haze, blue mountains, and blue water, and if you can, imagine the perfect day.

We were not the only people to feel it: a sense of rest had come over the whole ship. Cook's agent had no excursion. The Sund was shallow, and till the

tide was high there was not sufficient water for this great ship, so she glided on, barely rippling the fjord.

It was with much the same feeling as that of the boys who on a very hot day lay in the shade of a tree and ate apples, whilst the youngest was made to stand in the sun by way of contrast, so that his heat and weariness should make the others feel cooler and more rested, that we on the ship, under the awnings, watched Sambo, on one end of a long plank, on his back, washing the bottom of one of the boats. Another black gentleman was at the other end, painting as if for a wager, swinging his legs in time to a little chant that he sang. Squatted on the deck was a Lascar, quietly chipping the rust off a ring bolt, that had not escaped the first officer's vigilant eye, and from the open windows of the music-room came voices in unison. Right forward a knot of people sat in comfortable attitudes on their deck chairs, some with Baedeker's Guide open on their knee, telling off each rock, bay and mountain, as we passed. Others worked at some little flippant piece of sewing, just to say they were not idle; and others still lay well back, with cap pulled over their faces, going back to everyday life, in the prosaic land of Nod.

So we steamed through Vaags Fjord, into Solberg Fjord, enjoying every inch of the way; twisting and turning through the narrow Gi Sund at the head of the Solberg. Once again the mountains rose as we passed the island of Senjen on our left, and crossed the Malangen Fjord that ran athwart our course; then on round the curve that leads to Tromsö Sund.

A considerable tide was setting in, the buoys coming up and passing quickly, with quite a ripple round them.

Here it was that one of the terrible maelström was supposed to lead ships to their destruction. But this whirlpool, like the sea serpent, has died a natural death. The pilot scoffed at the idea, and suggested that this useful knowledge was imported, as it was not to be found on Norwegian charts. The stream is there, no doubt, but to anyone used to the tide at the mouth of Portsmouth harbour it seems but a sluggish current.

The streets of Tromsö are in no way interesting. There are some good fur shops, however. Evidently it is a busy trading place, if one may judge by the many vessels anchored there. Outside the town the green is luxuriant, and inside every house has some attempt at window-gardening. Geraniums, cacti, myrtles, and such-like foreigners, bloom and flourish under careful tending.

According to the pilot, the growth is wonderful: birch trees now in full leaf were quite bare only a couple of weeks ago. There is no closing of the blossoms at night-fall here, no vegetable repose, no halting of the upward movement of the sap, but one unceasing development, stimulated throughout by the continuous sunbeams. Then comes the long, long winter's sleep, and darkness, until the next short one-day summer awakens.

Tromsö stands on the oldest rocks of the globe. The anchorage where we now lay, in full sight of the town, was snug and protected. Red-roofed houses and picturesque groups of fishing cabins lined the water-side, jostling the great warehouses and boat-builders' yards. The new moon stood over pink-flushed Bensjordtind. The sea was calm; the air still and warm; the sky to the south one bright luminous haze of purple and yellow. The mountains and snow-wreaths glowed with that strange rosy fire of which Alpine travellers rave.

Level northern rays threw long blue shadows on the

quiet sound. The chatter of the gulls and the splashing of the fish that rose and flickered all round us were the only sounds that broke the silence. As the sun sailed along the horizon the shadows wheeled, but the colours remained. Sunset-glow deepened till it reached its greatest depth; then rosy sunrise gradually faded into the bright light of a summer day. Thus visible all at once from the ship's deck are evening and morning, night and day, sunrise and sunset, seen together, though definitely separated by the north midnight glow.

It was past eleven, and still the artist continued his sketch; midnight was going to strike as he lifted his head, holding the water colour away from him, and remarked, "I can't see as much as I did, so shall leave off." But there were the last touches to put, and before these were finished, the cooler grey of another day lit up the town. Why there should be such differences I am not able to say; why the sun's rays in passing westward should tint the sky with warm, languid, evening colours, while those that at the same moment start upwards towards the east should look so cool and grey and wakeful, I cannot tell; but here they are, side by side in unmistakable contrast.

Palest blue sky without a cloud, and the jagged peaks jut out of the snow wreaths, which curve and swell into every possible fantastic shape. Out of each hollow in the mountains the glaciers push downward, sometimes poised right on the edge of a precipice, glittering like emerald, and curling like the waves of some mighty frozen ocean. The crannies in the rocks are filled with snow right down to the water's edge, and the heat mist which partly veils the base of the grey rocks and hangs in horizontal wreaths, makes them appear the more enormous.

TROMSO, MIDNIGHT

We steam past jag after jag. Here the pinnacles cluster like armed knights springing up among the cliffs, there a tall arrow-headed rent stands almost upright, filled with a glacier that seems to be falling headlong from the heights above. Up against the blue it is smooth and white, tipping quietly over with a clean curve to the crest, where it breaks into thousands of pale green cracks and cliffs. Now it is squeezed between two upright masses of rock, and takes a twist to the left, corrugating and shrivelling the surface as though there were eddies and backwaters in this seemingly motionless torrent. There is farther down another smooth acre or two, which again below breaks up into peaks and ridges glistening like jewels.

Though flung so widely, there is order in the seams, which follow each other curve for curve. Suddenly, in the midst of its career, down the cleft the glacier comes to an end, and from it fine streams spring into space; thread-like at first, and then falling with a rhythmic patter, they at last become nothing but a thin cloud of misty vapour. Lower down still there is a basin into which the falling mist gathers once more, and turns into a silver vein, which sub-dividing again, dashes down a pyramid of fallen rocks and boulders into the fjord.

Now we are passing a huge bluff of cold grey silurian stone, seamed and worn by the frosts and snows of ages, stained russet and purple in patches. It is everywhere covered, on the flatter surfaces, by loose stones, and great piles of débris lean against the almost upright sides, with just here and there a little clinging grass.

Next there is a big sugar-loaf; the whole west side seems to be wearing away in one great cataract of rolling stones. Looking back, we see the whole of the peaks in a vista one behind the other, the snow glistening

bright in the sun, and cold and blue in the shadow. Miles away in the misty distance we discover the highest rocks only; the rest is vapour.

Following the coast as we had been doing, the Alpine forms disappeared in the Trondhjem depression, only to reappear as soon as Nordland began. Here we had again come into the well-known scenery, and a more majestic panorama it is impossible to find than the wild gabbro mountains of Lyngen in the glow of the midnight sun. Away from the sun lay the bay, a faint pink opal, the mountains the palest blue; the two colours mixed and reflected in the calm water. The glorious sun! who can describe it, the red glow in the sky, the pink haze along the foot of the mountains, the glowing peaks drawing out one after the other, and the mist making the whole look like transparencies.

The mountain behind which was the sun, stood up, a deep blue black. The sun drew nearer and nearer to the edge, disclosing a wonderful peak, a wall sheer down into the fjord. Soon in all its glory it blazed over the top, reflecting a ladder of light across the sea. The waters of the fjord turned to the palest steel with streaks of orange on the tops of the waves left by our screw and the over-ripple. A shoal of porpoises slowly diving were so much the colour of the ripple that it was difficult to tell one from the other.

As we neared Lyngen the sweet smell of the firs was wafted towards us from the shore, mixing with the freshness of the coming day, that was again intensifying the glow in the sky. I shall always associate Lyngen with the smell of the firs: never had I known it sweeter. On two sides they encircled us, growing thickly on the first ridge that followed the valley. It is a town of some importance, boasting two hotels, a church, a pastor,

DRYING STOCK FISH

a doctor, a lensmand, and a proud peasantry, to say nothing of a Lapp settlement.

Lyngen lies, like most of the other towns, enclosed in mountains on three sides, with the usual little white wooden church with a squat black roof, and many white houses dotted about. A pebbly beach circles the shore with rough grass growing to the edge, on which many boats were pulled up. To one side of the boats were the "hjell" for drying the Törfisk, and along the shore wandered the ponies, nibbling the grass whilst waiting for their masters, who had come in from the country round to church. Many people had assembled, for a bishop had come to confirm some of the Lapps, who in twos and threes were walking about the main street; wonderful little people these, and so fully aware of the note of colour needful for their grey surroundings. The carioles and stolkjaerres were in lines round the church, and the good people seemed to me almost as interested in the Lapps as we were. Many streamed along on the dusty road, in the company of the Vecti on their way to the camp. The Lapps had chosen well. Their camping ground was a mound covered with short grass, and fir trees with a babbling stream to one side and a thicket on the other, where the reindeer browsed and were milked.

There were some twenty or more Lapps—such funny little men with red-gold beards, and hair that grew like our friend the Golliewog's. They dressed in deep blue cloth caftans, with bright red, yellow, and green stripes round the edges. A four-cornered hat, the points of which turned up or down like the ears of a rabbit, adorned the men's heads. Their bundled-up gaitered legs and feet, and the broad leather belt fastened very low down, gave them impossibly long bodies and short

legs. These Lapps must have been fairly well off, as they had plenty of silver ornaments about them, and the women odd-shaped silver spoons, that they kept tucked in the bosom of their gown. Being dressed in cloth, too, was a sign of their wealth, meaning that they had two suits, the poorer Lapp only having the one of fur, like some of the small children, who gamboled about for all the world like Baby Bunting in his rabbit skin.

It was evident, at a first glance, that hot weather does not suit these people. They shone as they sat or walked in a perpetual state of oily fusion. I cannot think what they can have felt like in their huts in such a restricted area and in such weather. One can imagine that on the bleak cold fjelds such close quarters might be a source of comfort to its inhabitants; how a sense of warm, loving snugness might exist among a heap of these little people, when all huddled together on the floor round the centre fire during the long darkness of their bitter winter-time. On a day like this—well, it did not look comfortable.

The women were clothed like the men, all but the cap, which consisted of a skull-cap with lappets at the side, the top being scarlet, blue, or violet, with bands of many-coloured strips, and edged off close to the face with a little common white lace. The owner of this cap also had a handsome though gaudy tartan silk shawl over a woollen one, little bits of odd gold ornament on her belt, and a silver spoon.

We had some trouble to make her sit for her portrait, but she did in the end, and felt virtuous. A little man had been hanging in a dangerous way, with his family, over our shoulders, greatly interested in the work; she insisted on his sitting for his likeness also.

When he was seated, his wife took the long pipe she

was smoking out of her mouth, pushed it rapidly into his, dumped the baby on his knee, ran into the hut to fetch the baby's new and still more brilliant cap with a red bob on the top. She wrapped a big comforter round its neck, and only then sat down contented with herself, taking a puff at a friend's pipe now and then.

"The Lapps, who are generally called Finns in Norway, are a brachycephalic race, which, however, is very clearly distinguished anthropologically from the short-skulled type found among the true Norwegians." "The cranium is lower, more rounded, and with weak muscular attachments. The face is very broad across the cheekbones, tapering away to a weak chin, the nose flat, with a broad base, and the mouth large." The skin is dark, but I doubt me through dirt and exposure, as Mr. Hansen states that "the skin except in children is rather dark."

I talked and smiled to the baby whilst our artist sketched the group. The little thing was wailing, and looked as if it longed to be loosed from its coverings and lacings. Its little pale flat face was turned up to the sun, which made the weak eyes water and glued the red lids. Expressing my meaning by mute action, I pleaded, "Do unlace it," which the woman did with a grin. I was alarmed. The tiny thing caught hold of my two fingers and sat up. All its little wrappings fell off, and laid bare a white, plump, perspiring body, quite as pale and clean as any English baby. I kissed and tickled it, making it laugh, to the joy of the camp.

"The hair is generally chestnut brown, but quite as often fair as dark. The growth of hair on the men's faces is weak and shaggy, generally confined to the upper lip and a little on the chin. The eyes are quite as often light as dark, are deep-set, sometimes obliquely placed

under heavy, often inflamed eyelids." The stature of the pure Lapp is very small, not averaging more than five feet; to this is added a slender frame, round chest, and but slight muscular development, bow legs, short broad feet and a waddling gait. How far the fairness is due to the long-continued crossing with Scandinavians, it is difficult to determine; but the shorter-skulled half of Mantegazza's Lapps were if anything fairer than the less short-skulled. In any case, however, the Lapps form a very distinct race, having their nearest relatives among the Mongolian tribes.

Nansen in his first crossing of Greenland had ample time to study the two Lapps, Balto and Ravna, who accompanied him. The first named he calls a "River Lapp"; these are generally people of some size and have much Finn blood in them, and are of average height. Balto, an intelligent fellow, did everything he undertook with great energy, showed some power of endurance, was willing to lend a hand at any job, whilst his ready tongue and broken Norwegian constituted him one of the enlivening spirits of the expedition. Ravna was a mountain Lapp from the neighbourhood of Karasjok, and had spent all his nomadic life in a tent, wandering with his reindeer about the mountain wastes of Finmarken, often swimming them across the fjords to feed on the islands. Apparently mountain Lapps are lazy, as Nansen describes him as never being so pleased as when sitting in the corner of the tent with his legs crossed doing absolutely nothing. "He was very small, but surprisingly strong and capable of any amount of endurance. He could not write, and had no acquaintance with so modern an apparatus as a watch. But he could read, and his favourite book was his Lappish New Testament, from which he was never parted." Nansen continues: "Ravna

and Balto were good-natured and amiable; their fidelity was often actually touching, and I grew very fond of them both."

The Lapp's peculiar boots are called *finnesko*, and are made of the skin of the legs of the reindeer buck, the pieces with the hair on being laid for twenty-four hours or so in a strong decoction of birch or similar bark, or sometimes tanned in tar water. The skin of the hind legs is used for the soles and sides, and that of the fore legs for the upper leather, the hair being left outside throughout the boot; these the Lapps fill with sedge or *sennegraes* and also wrap their bare feet in the grass, making a pre-eminently warm covering suitable for use on "ski" or snow-shoes.

Here I feel I cannot do better than quote Andr. M. Hansen's description of these little people, who filled us all with so much interest. On board the ship all sorts of questions were asked, and many of us would have given a good deal to have a short history of the Lapps at hand.

"Their language is nearly allied to that of the Finlanders, more distantly to the other 'Finno-Ugrian' or 'Ural-Attaic.' There is now no longer reason for upholding the old doctrine that the Lapps originally peopled the whole of Scandinavia; they came to Norway later than either of the two types that are found among the Norwegians proper, coming from the east by a northern route, as a hunting, fishing people with the culture of the stone age. A special type of stone implements has been referred specially to them—'the arctic stone age,'—and these implements must have been in use among them much longer than among the Scandinavians, who in their turn taught them the full use of the reindeer, upon which the true nomadic Lapps are so dependent for their sub-

sistence. A Lapp is not considered eligible till he possesses a herd of two hundred of these animals. A thousand years ago they were found as fishers at the head of the fjords, or wandering as nomads among the mountains in very much the same districts as now, hardly south of Jemtland. It is only lately that they have advanced in any numbers worth mentioning, along the mountain ridge, south of 64°. The Lapps cannot be said to be dying out, for throughout the country they have increased from about 7000 in 1724 to 13,000 in 1845, and 21,000 in 1891. Barely one-tenth of these are now true nomadic Lapps; most of them live as fishermen in the two most northerly provinces."

After seeing the Lapps, it was with much interest I read the following experiences of an Englishman who, through stress of weather, was obliged to shelter in one of their camps:—

"The low limit of the fjeld Finns is the sea-level, about the North Cape. In Sweden the deer only come down in winter. There is plenty of moss pasture near the sea, but a certain fly drives deer and men to the snow. Farther south wild reindeer keep on the high tops, about Romsdal. Tame deer are kept as far south as Bergen, but they do not flourish in that wet climate, and they are kept in the high fjeld. They never come down to the sea or rich pasture, but seem to prefer cold, and moss which grows in cold regions.

"By the time we got up to the *kotas*, we had passed through some sharp showers. The Lapps had now arrived, and a tent was pitched beside the conical hut. In the *kota* I found a dirty old woman and a lot of dirty children sitting round a fire made in the middle of a ring of stones, and looking very picturesque in the half light that streamed down through the chimney.

There was a heap of gear and human creatures, iron pots and wooden bowls, dogs and deerskins, piled in admirable confusion.

"I tried the other tent, and found a very fine-looking Lapp woman sitting on a heap of deerskins, serving out coffee and reindeer cream to the *clocker* with a quaint silver spoon. She had silver bracelets and a couple of silver rings; and altogether, with her black hair and dark brown eyes glancing in the firelight, she looked Eastern and magnificent. I set to work with the paint-box instanter, but she would not sit still for a moment, and it was almost dark. I gave it up, and went out amongst the deer.

"There were about six hundred in the herd, and some old stags were quite magnificent. One had fourteen points on one brow antler, and about forty in all. He looked quite colossal in the evening mist. A small imp of a boy, about three feet high, and a child just able to toddle, were wandering about amongst the deer. The boy was amusing himself by catching the largest stags with a lasso, to pull the loose velvet from their antlers. He never missed his throw, and when he had the noose round the beast's neck, it was grand to see him set his heels on the ground, and haul himself in, hand over hand, till he got the noose round the stag's nose. Then he had him safe and quiet, with the nose and neck tied together, and then they posed for a picture of savage life. The small imp was practising on the calves and hinds, and screaming at them in simulation of the bigger brother. He kept kicking the big stags, which lay on the ground, with the most perfect familiarity.

"After I got packed into my nest, the whole herd almost walked over me. I heard their heels clicking beside my head, as they went grunting like a herd of

swine. A Lapp followed, shouting a deep, guttural 'Ho!' at intervals, and several dogs followed, yelping at his heels. It was a queer feeling to lie there on the bare hillside, and hear the rushing sound of their feet sweep through the low scrubby brush, and gradually fade away as they trotted off to the sound of 'Ho!' Presently came the patter of rain, and the sough of a rushing wind that shook the willow bushes, and swept moaning over the hill. My low shelter was warm and dry, and I slept soundly.

"Awakened by hearing the Lapps chattering; poked my head out, and found everything wrapped in thick mist. Pulled my head in again to brood over my ill-luck, and gather courage for a plunge into air. Rolled out at last and scrambled into a *kota*, where I found Marcus smoking as usual. All the children were scrambling about their mother, who was getting ready for milking the deer. I got some food packed up, and talked about this unattainable place, Antsik. No one who was at home could find the way in such a mist; so there was nothing for it but to wait for clear weather, or the father of the family, who was away.

"I watched the day's proceedings till the mist changed into heavy rain; when I pitched my tent again to keep a dry bed, and spent the day in sketching and studying Lapps. The rain came through the tent, and in the hut it was impossible even to sit on the ground without bending forward. The children would look over my shoulder, to my terror, so sketching was not easy. There were five dogs, three children, the old woman, Marcus, and myself; and all day long the handsome lady from next door, and her husband, and a couple of quaint, mangy-looking old fellows, kept popping in to see how the stranger got on.

"The *kota* itself was a cone of birch sticks and green turf, about seven feet high; and twelve or fourteen in diameter. It was close quarters, but the scene was worth the discomfort. No one seemed to care a rap for rain, or fear colds, more than the deer.

"Breakfast consisted of milk and cheese and boiled fish; and whenever any dish had been used, the old dame carefully wiped it out with her crooked forefinger, and then licked the finger and every attainable place in the dish itself. It was wonderful to see her dexterity, and to hear her talk while she polished the dish. When one of the children spilt some milk on its deerskin dress, it was all gathered and licked up with the same tongue which found time to scold the offender.

"Dinner was reindeer's flesh boiled. The children cracked the bones on the stones after they had polished the outside; and they sucked up the marrow. Then the dogs, who had not dared to steal, were called in their turn, and got the scraps. Wooden bowls were set apart for the dogs. There was an extra meal after dinner on the arrival of papa, who came, dripping like a river-god, with a supply of bread, butter, and salt fish, stowed in a leathern bag. This was evidently an unusual treat, so it was all consumed.

"The father was a fine man for a Lapp, forty years old, and five feet high; he had walked fourteen miles in a deluge, but he only wrung his tall, conical blue cap to keep the water from trickling down his nose; and then he sat down to watch his children enjoy the feast, while a brother, and a young girl who came with him, joined our circle. We were decidedly too thick, so I went next door. There I found nobody at home but a black dog. Seated myself on a pile of deerskins to have a quiet pipe, and was startled by a loud Lapp

exclamation, which came from an old fellow on whom I had sat. I got up, laughing, and made Marcus brew coffee for all hands.

"The tent was about as big as the *kota*, made of striped stuff, so coarse that I could almost see through it, as through a veil. It was patched here and there, and smoked brown near the top. It did not touch the ground anywhere, and at the smallest disturbance three dogs plunged out, barking. They popped in when the row was over, and curled themselves up amongst the gear. The door was a canvas slip, like a boat's jib, with cross-sticks to fasten it, and was to windward so that it could not blow open. No one could come in without stooping, kneeling, and turning sideways. . . . The canvas was stretched on poles, which were joined at the top with considerable skill. . . . The owners of the tent were married in winter, and had lots of gear, silver ornaments, bone contrivances, one of which was for weaving coloured woollen bands; baskets of ingenious shapes, very well made of birch and fir roots variously coloured. They all wore long knives, and the newly married couple smoked and drank coffee at intervals all day.

"Next morning found the Lapps getting up, the old woman licking the dishes clean for breakfast, the father smoking whilst putting on the shoes of his youngest child. He first spread out a handful of fine hay made from a particular kind of grass, and then he tossed it on the stones beside the fire till it was perfectly dry. Then the boy was seized by his leg and laid on his back, while foot and hay was crammed and stuffed into a miniature Lapp shoe. It was a work of some difficulty to make all fit nicely, and bind it all neatly round the leg and the leather leggings. They made a good group,

THE FJELD LAPPER OF THE NO-MAN'S-LAND THAT DIVIDES NORWAY FROM SWEDEN

the father and son, and a black puppy that would nibble the boy's rosy cheeks as he lay sprawling on the ground. The Lapps are small of stature, very hardy, good sturdy walkers, utterly careless about wind and weather. They are not free with their goods; they are not hospitable. No Lapp ever offered me milk or coffee when he helped himself. They gave what I asked for, and I paid; but other hill-folk offer their best to the stranger."

From a topographical point of view, Norway does not seem to have any natural boundaries, in a general sense, on her land side. It was proved to be utterly impossible to draw a reasonable frontier-line that really followed the parting of the watersheds. No marked division exists, no chain of mountains, no separating keel. It has never been a definite natural line that has divided Norway from her neighbours on the east. It has been a band of desert land, some hundreds of miles in width; so utterly desolate and apart from the area of continuous habitation, that the greater part of it, the district, a desolate boundary, north of Trondhjem, was looked upon so late as the last century as No Man's Land. Heathen Lapps wandered about in it, sometimes taxed by all three countries.

This district was parcelled out to Sweden in 1751 and to Russia in 1826. It was partly on account of the geographical ideas prevailing at that time on the subject of mountain ranges and watersheds, that the boundary was drawn so far west on the mountain plateau as it lies, without following any well-defined ridge. The width of this desolate region is about 200 miles, with a population of one per four square miles. Along the Swedish frontier southwards to 60 degrees N. latitude, the desert strip, serviceable only to the nomads, is about 120 miles wide, double the width of Norway itself.

Altogether Lapland sends down a wedge between Norway and Sweden calculated to be 150,000 square miles in area, with only 15,000 inhabitants,—a lonely off-shoot from the tundra belt of the shores of the Polar Sea. This Lapland strip is almost broken off by the depressions round the Trondhjem Fjord. The forests from both sides meet here in the glens between the valleys. Thus, as a whole, Norway's land boundaries towards Sweden, Russia, and Finland are defined by a broad band, desolate, trackless, uninhabited, or only occupied by the nomadic Lapp and forest Finn, — a band that forms a very complete isolation for the home of the Norwegian people.

CHAPTER XIII

HAMMERFEST AND NORTH CAPE

WE had left Lyngen and all its beauties behind, and were just passing Hasvik point, that lay to our left dark against the sky, when far ahead down the peaceful Sörö Sund we became aware of a great cloud of black smoke rising high into the sky, and wondered what in the world it could be.

Everything burns so readily in Norway, that at first we thought it could be nothing but a hamlet on fire. Smoke seemed so out of place against the thin, transparent haze that lay over this beautiful stretch of water. However, it advanced rapidly, and we soon made out that there were many parallel columns rising from a mass of funnels and masts painted a soft French grey. As they came on we knew them at once as the German Emperor's battleships. They were in line ahead, throwing the white spray of the peaceful fjord from either side of their bows, and showing to the world at large the sea power of the Fatherland. We soon made out the golden eagles, the speed cones at the yard-arms, the colours at the peaks, the men clustered round the guns, and officers upon the bridges. They certainly kept station well, looked as fresh as paint could make them, and, except for the distinguishing red bands round their funnels, seemed all exactly alike.

The masts of shipping rose in an inlet by the point,

and after the quiet of Lyngen, Sörö Sund seemed quite a populous highway. To our right rose the unexplored glaciers of Jadki in the island of Seiland, and to our left the island of Sörö, on the head of which rested patches of snow. Every here and there a green bank rose to the top, alongside bare, seamed rocks. We passed a light-house on one hand, and the curiously shaped island of Haajen on the other, and crossed the strait of Strömmen, that divides Seiland from Kvalö, on which is Hammerfest, the most northern town in Europe.

We are in 70° 40′ 11″ N. latitude. There could not be a greater contrast between the prevalent notion of the Arctic regions and the actual reality. Snow lay in patches at the tops of the hills, it is true, but spring flowers were sprouting in every sheltered nook. Big bright patches of green grass came down to the water's edge, and a mass of glowing buttercups filled the head of the bay. The houses, all of wood as usual, except those rebuilt since the great fire of 1890, are ranged in rows, with some likeness to streets. The great warehouses stand along the quays, running up both sides of the town harbour, that was full of vessels of many nations. The largest number were from the ports of the White Sea, their yards and spars made a perfect maze. Bearded Russians, Englishmen, Swedes, Germans, Quains, Finns, and Lapps filled the streets, lounging about doors, smoking and chattering in many tongues. Boat-loads of dried cod were being tossed into warehouses. They seemed to be as hard as sticks, but every boy had a bit in his pocket, and as he ran about crunched and sucked it. In every available corner hung strings of dried and drying fish; festoons of them were on the ships and along the quays, and every warehouse was piled full on each floor with fish and salt.

HAMMERFEST

Founded in 1787, Hammerfest's trade consists of train and cod-liver oil, fish, whales, and furs. Large train-oil stores line the beach. Besides the Protestant Church Hammerfest can boast a Roman Catholic Chapel, a Baptist one, called "Bethel," and a few shops. Here the sun does not set from the 13th of May to the 29th of July, and never rises from the 18th of November to the 23rd January; but the electric light, introduced into the town in 1891, saves the situation. Cod-liver oil, prepared in numerous boilers, is the most valuable commodity of the place, and gives the town that smell many of us as children knew so well, from old Dr. de John's dark brown to what is now playfully called "tasteless."

For some unexplained reason the population that wandered on the quays (that were the most attractive portion of the town) looked innocent. The fishermen Lapps, that landed from their boats, contentedly picked up discarded carrot-tops and chewed them with apparent satisfaction. Mrs. Lapp and the Baby Bunting Lapps (nothing but balls of fur) bustled about, whilst Father Lapp sat on the gaily-coloured box, that no doubt contained all their valuables and wardrobe, nursing the last new-comer in its odd-shaped cradle. He was a proud father, and was unaffectedly pleased at our notice of the little one. The Lapp cradle has a great deal of sense in it. Wherever the baby is placed it is warm, its little face shaded from the glare by the close curtains, and its little body, that is so carefully laced in, is on the whole free. None of its clothes are tied or fastened. They are merely wrapped, one soft wrapping over another, and the whole is so portable that the mother walks about with it slung over her shoulder by a thong, or carried in front. They were a happy, chatty little people, so unfeignedly pleased to meet their friends,

as they gathered at the long tables set on shore under the lee of the warehouses, where Lapp, Quain, Finn, and all sorts of seafarers sat down to an out-door meal. The nursemaids looked on at the shouting, rushing, and yelling of a madcap company of Americans, with doe-like, wondering eyes, while small parties stood and watched the noisy foreigner at the street-corners or gathered in the square.

I was surprised at the quantity of telegraph cables that left this small town, to all parts of the globe. In the telegraph office a large map showed the whole wonderful system. The elderly man at the desk looked at me over his glasses as I passed in my wire. I wondered if he was the same man who had been so electrified at the importance of the news that he was to take to Nansen—

"'There stood a gentleman," says Nansen, "with a telegram in his hand, who introduced himself as the head of the telegraph office, and said that he had a telegram to deliver to me which he thought would interest me, so he had come with it himself. Something that would interest me? There was only one thing left in the world that could really interest me. With trembling hands I tore open the telegram—'FRIDTJOF NANSEN,—*Fram* arrived in good condition. All well on board. Shall start at once for Tromsö. Welcome home. OTTO SVERDRUP.'"

This was on August 24, 1896; at the moment that Nansen, in Sir George Baden-Powell's yacht, was about to sail. The two parties meeting after many months of separation by the terrible ice-pack.

The little fountain in the middle of the square played merrily, shooting and upholding in the air a small silvered ball, the water splashing back into a granite basin. The

fenced-in garden grew only the homely buttercup, but the little patch was intensely green and bright. High above the town rose the tapering spars of the Marconi-graph, and in a line below it was a goat tethered on a house-top quietly browsing. The newest thing in telegraphy, and the oldest form of roof, stood exemplified.

At the end of the promontory of Fuglnaes, on the opposite side to the town, is the light-house, with the keeper's house all snug and comfortable,—a sinecure at this time of the year. The men standing round a cauldron told us on the 17th of August the light would be lit for the first time since the spring. All round were the long railings, or "hjell," for drying the fish—acres of them. And close by a conspicuous column of granite called the *Meridianstötte*, crowned with a bronze globe, erected to commemorate the measurements of degrees in 1852–62 by the geometers of three nations, by order of King Oscar and Emperors Alexander I. and Nicholas I. On the Fuglnaes Sir Edward Sabine made some famous experiments with the pendulum in 1823. In 1818 he accompanied Sir John Ross in search of the North-West Passage, and that of Sir E. Parry soon afterwards, but his most scientific work was his pendulum observations; he being the first to show the altogether unexpected amount of accuracy attainable in a matter which under the most favourable conditions is one of great delicacy. It was mainly through Sir Edward Sabine's energy that systems of magnetic observatories were established in various parts of British territory all over the globe.

The fog that had so often been predicted had come at last. It was not possible to realise that it existed at all. The bay was clear and blue, and so was the sky, but just outside it was as though a grey curtain had been drawn

across the fjord. The captain paced the deck, impatient to be off. The pilot looked stolidly ahead into the bank of fog that was slowly thinning, till first one peak and then another was seen as though floating on the top—islands in the mist. We had lain with shortened cable for some time. As the fog lifted, the chain again rattled and wound in round the steaming capstan, the forecastle head crowded with nimble-footed Lascars tending and bedding the monster anchor as its head appeared in line with the deck. We were once more off, and carefully threading our way northwards, when again the mist enveloped the ship, and so closely that the water was invisible from the deck. There was nothing for it but to let go. The cable rattled and rattled, link after link plunging overboard. The chain-locker must have been well-nigh, if not quite, empty; fathoms and fathoms deep was the fjord, and around and ahead could be heard the whistle of the launch that had been lowered from the ship to find soundings, our great deep note answering the shrill whistle with a mighty Ha-a-a.

In the *Natural History of Norway* 1751, Pontoppidan tells us that the *kraken* (that died so hard) is the largest creature in the world; "its back or upper part, which seems to be in appearance about an English mile and a half in circumference (some say more, but I choose the least for the greater certainty), look at first like a number of small islands surrounded with something that floats and fluctuates like seaweeds. It is said that if the creature's arm (tentacula) were to lay hold of the largest man-of-war, they would pull it down to the bottom." He then proceeds to say, "If I were an admirer of uncertain reports and fabulous stories, I might add much more concerning this and other Norwegian monsters, whose existence I will not take on me to deny, but I do not choose by a

mixture of uncertain relations to make such accounts appear doubtful as I myself believe to be true and well attested."

Mr. Milford gives an extract from a letter of "an intelligent friend at Bergen," Stiftamund Christie, whose name is so much connected with the political institutions of Norway from the year 1814. "I especially asked his opinion about the sea-serpent, and he assured me that not only do the peasants feel convinced of its existence, but that he himself believes that it exists; that the Bishop of Bergen, a few years ago, published an article in an antiquarian paper which comes out occasionally, by the directors of the Bergen Museum, containing information in corroboration of the belief; that the inhabitants of the island Herroe at Sondmör see the serpent every year for a couple of months, in summer, whenever the weather is fine and the sea calm." Who would disbelieve the Bishop? Does the *kraken* still exist? If so, this was the moment when we should have seen it. Through the fog it was possible to imagine the existence of any such huge sea-monster.

In Hakluyt's *Traffiques and Discouveries* we find that "They proceeded to sea againe, and Master Chanceler held on his course towards that unknown part of the world, and sailed so farre, that hee came at last to the place where hee found no night at all but a continual light and brightness of the Sunne shining clearly upon the huge and mightie Sea." And here is a report to "Alfred King of England, about the year 890."

"Octher said that the country wherein he dwelt was called Helgoland. He said that upon a certeine time he fell into a fantasie and desire to proove and know how farre that land stretched Northward, and wether there were any habitations of men North beyond the

desert. Whereupon he tooke his voyage directly north along the coast, hauing vpon his steereboord alwayes the desert land and vpon his leereboord the main Ocean: and continued his course for the space of 3 dayes. In which space he was come as far towards the North as commonly the whale hunters vse to trauell, whence he proceeded on his course still towards the North so farr as he was able to saile in other 3 dayes. At the end whereof he perceiued that the coast turned towards the East, or els the sea opened with a maine gulfe into the land, he knew not how farre. Well he wist and remembered that he was faine to stay till he had a Westerne wind and somewhat Northerly: and thence he sailed plaine East along the coast still so far as he was able in the space of 4 dayes. At the end of which time he was compelled againe to stay till he had a full Northerly winde, forsomuch as the coast bowed thence directly towards the South, or at leastwise the sea opened into the land he could not tell how farre. . . . Thorowout all his voyage he had euermore on his steereboord, a wildernesse and desert countrey, except that in some places he saw a few fishers, fowlers and hunters, which were all Fynnes: and all the way vpon his leereboord was the maine ocean. . . . The principal purpose of this traueile was to encrease the knowledge and discoverie of these coasts and countreyes, for the more commoditie of fishing of horse whales, which have in their teeth bones of great price and excellence, whereof he brought some at his return unto the king. Skinnes are also very good to make cables for shippes."

Like Octher, we too were going "to encrease the knowledge and discoveries of these coasts and countreyes, more especially the horse whales," but of this later. At the moment we were off Hjelmsö on a placid blue sea, the

little islands of Molfö and Ingö left astern, and nothing but a vast open expanse of ocean ahead. Hjelmsö stood boldly out of the sea, the fleeting shadows running and chasing each other over the rock, whilst myriads of birds flew across its face high into the sky, disturbed from their nesting-places by the fire of our gun. As we passed on, the cliffs took new and fantastic shapes; the most wonderful being the Man Rock; to my thinking it looked more like a colossal statue of the Madonna and Child, which, as the ship steamed farther north, opened out into an up-standing hand.

> "And then uprose before me,
> Upon the water's edge,
> The huge and haggard shape
> Of that unknown North Cape
> Whose form is like a wedge."—LONGFELLOW

Cool, hard, and grey against the sky, stood the famous Nordkap, furrowed with deep clefts and bare of verdure, except upon the top, where its surface told sharp against the sky, a pale dried-up green. But not so the next bend, where ran in a sheltered bay called Hornvik, off which we anchored. On landing to climb to the summit, the first part of the way was over loose stones. Finns had sighted the ship, and stood offering odd mementoes of the North, —whale-bone stools, sticks, wonderfully well-carved knife handles, and shells. My surprise was great to find this steep glen carpeted with flowers. Varieties that we had not seen up to date blooming, tall and delicate, in this sheltered nook, and looking strange amongst so much that was bare and unpromising. Here, on the side of the path where one had to cling to the rope, grew the yellow-spurred violet (*Viola hanicarnis*), a tiny plant only found on very poor soil; and alongside it, taller and

bigger than I had yet seen, grew *Dryas octopetala.* This same studded the top of the North Cape, but was there far more stunted. Big yellow globe-flowers waved in company of many grasses, forget-me-nots, the pale wild violet, and purple cranesbill.

The way up was very rough, and along the top the surface was nothing but grey, loose stones intersected with stunted growths of stone moss. A lonely spot was this, and in the winter awful, with the storms that circle round the headland, the lightning, the thunder, the powerful sea, and the dark. Those who were not strong enough for the climb had had some fine sport with the fish, which was most plentiful.

Again we steamed north; the sun no longer sinking, revolved round us, lighting the cliffs and sky above; the sun worshippers on board bowed to the deck, gazed and prayed, and we were silenced by its wonder. Sea, nothing but sea! met our gaze. This was a day for entering up diaries, reading and rest; I for one enjoyed and made the most of the opportunity, collecting, drying, and preserving flowers, sorting and naming. I also read my book upon the subject, and found that the forest growth of Norway consists chiefly of pine and fir, which clothe the slopes of the mountain valleys, especially in southern Norway, as those of Glommen and its tributaries, those of the Drammen, Lanrvik, Skien, Arendal, and Christiansand districts, and those drained by the river disemboguing at Frederikshald. Extensive forests of coniferous trees are also found in Trondhjem stift and the Amt of Nordland.

The woods of Bergen and Tromsö consist, with a solitary exception, of fir alone. The limit of the fir belt is 2000 to 3000 feet above the sea—through the Trondhjem district from 1600 to 2000—and with the sole exception

of the birch, none of the trees indigenous to the country, bearing or producing leaves, form woods of great extent. The birch reaches higher up the mountain sides than do any of the conifers, and forms a belt above them, which is, however, exceedingly narrow in Southern Norway. Next come the dwarf birch and various species of willows, and, last of all, between this and the snow-limit, the lichen belt. In the fertile and less elevated districts of Norway the forest growth, apart from the conifers, includes the ash, elm, lime, oak, beech, and black alder. The aspen, white alder, mountain ash, and bird-cherry thrive at a considerable elevation, and are occasionally found even in the birch zone. The ash still grows abundantly on the south-eastern coast, from Jarlsberg-Laurvik and to Christiansand, but is nowhere found in extensive forests. The only locality in which the beech can be said to thrive is Jarlsberg-Laurvik amt.

The vast fir and pine forests are still the haunts of the largest of Europe's wild animals—the bear, the lynx, and the wolf—though for some unaccountable reason the latter has been decreasing during the last twenty years in Southern Norway and may now be regarded as the most rare of Norwegian beasts of prey. In Finmark the wolf still abounds, constituting the worst enemy to the herds of reindeer. The bear also is less frequently met with, a fact to be accounted for by the immense quantities of timber felled of late throughout the country.

Björnson, in his pretty tale, *The Bridal March*, describes a bear breaking through the forest and frightening Mildred, the heroine, who was sitting one day near the *soeter*, herding the goats and sheep, because one of the boys had played truant and she had to do his work.

"It was a warm midday; she was sitting in the shade

of a hillock overgrown with birch and underwood; she had thrown off her jacket and taken her knitting in her hand, and was expecting Inga. Something rustled behind her. 'There she comes,' thought Mildred, and looked up. But there was more noise than Inga was likely to make, and such a breaking and cracking among the bushes. Mildred turned pale, got up, and saw something hairy and a pair of eyes below it,—it must be a bear's head! She wanted to scream, but no voice would come; she wanted to run, but could not stir.

"The thing raised itself up—it was a tall, broad-shouldered man with a fur cap, a gun in his hand. . . . 'Oh, dear!' she said; 'I thought it was a bear breaking through the bushes, and I got such a fright!' and she tried to laugh. 'Well, it might almost have been that,' said he, speaking in a very quiet voice; 'Kvas and I were on the track of a bear, but now we have lost it; and if I have a *badoger* (the old superstition that every man is followed by an invisible animal resembling him in character, a superstition which is still common among the peasants), it is certainly a bear. . . .' She felt the inclination to say, 'Go away!' but instead she drew back a few steps, and asked, 'Who are you?' She was really frightened. 'Hans Haugen,' answered the man rather absently; for he was paying attention to the dog, which seemed to have found the track of the bear again. . . . 'Forgive me for having frightened you,' he said, and took his way up the hillside after his dog.

"By the time she ventured to look up he had just reached the top of the ridge, and there he turned to look at her. It was only for an instant, for at that moment the dog barked on the other side. Hans gave a start, held his gun in readiness, and hurried on. Mildred was still gazing at the place where he had stood, when a shot

startled her. Could this be the bear? Could it have been so near her? Off she went climbing where he had just climbed, till she stood where he had stood, shading her eyes with her hand; and, sure enough, there was Hans half hidden by a bush, on his knees beside a huge bear!

"Before she knew what she was doing, she was down beside him. He gave her a smile of welcome, and explained to her, in his low voice, how it had happened that they had lost the track and the dog had not scented the animal till they were almost upon it. By this time she had forgotten her tears and her bashfulness, and he had drawn his knife to skin the bear on the spot. The flesh was of no value at the time; he meant to bury the carcass and take only the skin. So she held, and he skinned; then she ran down to the *soeter* for an axe and spade; and although she still felt afraid of the bear, and it had a bad smell, she kept on helping him till all was finished. By this time it was long past twelve o'clock, and he invited himself to dinner at the *soeter*. He washed himself and the skin, no small piece of work, and then came in and sat beside her while she finished preparing the food."

The bears are most numerous now in Trondhjem, Nordland, and Romsdal amts; in all some hundred and fifty are killed throughout Norway in the year. Lynxes, too, are fairly plentiful and do not seem to diminish. Nordre Trondhjem would appear to be its northern limit, where its depredations on feathered game and hares cease.

In the great forests—especially where the soil is marshy, and there is a mingled growth of ash, mountain ash, and willow—the elk occurs, and appears to be increasing in numbers in some places, notwithstanding the vast quantity

of timber felled, doubtless attributable to the rapid decrease of its worst enemies, the wolf and the bear. The elk is most numerous in Hedemark, Buskerud, and in some parts of Akershus and Smaalenene, and considerable numbers have been met with of late throughout Nordre Trondhjem amt. Nowhere is the elk found in the west of Norway, but its place is partially taken by the red deer, which selects as its haunts the largest of the wooded islands on the coast and the numerous semi-insular projections of the mainland. It is most abundant on the island of Hiteren, at the mouth of the Trondhjem Fjord.

The wild, desolate wastes of the fjelds are the home of the glutton and the reindeer, the lemming and the polar fox. Large herds of reindeer still roam throughout the alpine region of the fjelds between Eastern and Western Norway and on the Dovre Mountains, the Rundam and the highlands between Gudbrandsdal and Osterdal, and Gudbrandsdal and Valders; but this noble animal has become scarcer of late years largely due to the numbers killed by peasant hunters who fire into the midst of the herd, sometimes maiming at a shot half a dozen animals, which they cannot hope to secure, and which afterwards become the prey of the glutton.

Of all the animal tribe in Norway the lemming is by far the most curious. It is quite a small animal belonging to the order Rodentia, is about five inches long, with a soft yellowish brown coat marked with spots of dark brown and black. It has a short rounded head, obtuse muzzle, small bead-like eyes, and short rounded ears, nearly concealed by the fur. The tail is very short, the feet small, each with five claws, those of the forefeet strongest, and fitted for scratching and digging. The usual dwelling-place of the lemmings is in the high lands or fells of the

great central mountain chain of Norway and Sweden, from the southern branches of the Langfjeldem in Christiansand stift to the North Cape and the Varanger Fjord. South of the Arctic circle they are, under ordinary circumstances, exclusively confined to the plateaus covered with dwarf birch and juniper about the conifer region, though in Tromsö amt and in Finmarken they occur in all suitable localities down to the level of the sea. The nest is formed under a tussock of grass or a stone and constructed of short dry straws, and usually lined with hair. The number of young is usually five, occasionally seven or eight, and at least two broods annually. Their food is entirely vegetable, grass roots and stalks, shoots of the dwarf birch, reindeer lichens, and mosses. They are restless, courageous, pugnacious little animals, and when disturbed, instead of running away, sit up with their back against a stone or other coign of vantage, hissing and showing fight in a very determined manner.

The circumstance which has given more popular interest to the lemming than to a host of other species of the same order of animals, is that certain districts of the cultivated lands of Norway and Sweden, where in ordinary circumstances they are quite unknown, are occasionally and at very uncertain intervals, varying from five to twenty or more years, literally overrun by an army of these little creatures. They steadily and slowly advance, always in the same direction, and regardless of all obstacles, swimming across streams and even lakes of several miles in breadth, devastating the herbage by the quantity of food they consume. In this march across country they are pursued and harassed by crowds of beasts and birds of prey, as bears, wolves, foxes, dogs, wild cats, stoats, weasels, eagles, hawks, and owls. Man never spares them, and even the domestic animals not

usually carnivorous cannot resist these much-harried little animals, and cattle, goats, and reindeer crush them with a stroke of their cloven hoofs, for the sake of the vegetable matter they contain. None ever return by the course by which they came, and the onward march of the survivors never ceases until they reach the sea, into which they plunge, and, swimming onwards in the same direction as before, perish in the waves. It reminds one of the swine in Scripture into which the evil spirits had entered.

The ancient belief of the Norwegian peasants, shared in by Olaus Magnus, was that these little animals fell from the clouds; and another untenable hypothesis is that of Mr. W. D. Crotch, that they are acting in these migrations in obedience to an instinct inherited from vastly ancient times, and are still seeking the congenial home in the submerged Atlantis to which their ancestors of the Miocene period were wont to resort when driven from their ordinary dwelling-places by crowding or scarcity of food.

The principal really ascertained facts regarding these migrations, as stated by Mr. R. Cottell in *Proceedings of the Linnean Society*, vol. xiii. p. 327, 1878, seem to be as follows :—

" When any combination of circumstances has occasioned an increase of the numbers of the lemmings in their ordinary dwelling-places, impelled by the restless or migratory instinct possessed in a less developed degree by so many of their congeners, a movement takes place at the edge of the elevated plateau, and a migration towards the lower-lying land begins. The whole body moves forward slowly, always advancing in the same general direction in which they originally started, but following more or less the course of the great valleys.

They only travel by night; staying in congenial places for considerable periods, with unaccustomed abundance of provender. Notwithstanding all the destructive influences to which they are exposed they multiply excessively during their journey, having still more numerous families and more frequently than in their usual homes. The progress may last from one to three years, according to the route taken and the distance to be traversed until the seacoast is reached, which in a country so surrounded by water as the Scandinavian peninsula must be the ultimate goal of such a journey. This may be either the Atlantic or the Gulf of Bothnia, according as the migration has commenced from the west or the east side of the central elevated plateau. Those that finally perish in the sea, committing what appears to be a voluntary suicide, are only acting under the same blind impulse which has led them previously to cross smaller pieces of water with safety."

Insignificant as this little animal is, he plays an important part all over Norway, having before now laid waste entire districts, and so polluted the waters as to cause what was called lemming fever, a horrible kind of jaundice. Fortunately a lemming year comes at rare intervals, the last migration reported being in 1863. One thing, and only one, makes some amends to the poor farmer for his destroyed crops and poisoned water. The lemming is delicious food to all the wild animals which follow their track across country; thus the bad harvest is often made good by the hunting that follows.

Like our own late spring in England, the most beautiful time of the year in Norway is when the flowers show through the grass. In Norway the greater part of the meadows are "natural," it is the grasses belonging

to the land that are allowed to contend for a place in it, and very beautiful they are when in full flower. The grass is fine and soft, such as the *Agrostis vulgaris*, with its brush of fine reddish brown hairs, the yellowish green fragrant *Cæspitosa*, in company of the *Ranunculus acris* and *Rhinanthus*, that pretty, innocent-looking little creeper that clings to the grass stems, pushing rootlets into its host all the way up, by way of sustenance. The blue-eyed hepatica grows in the spring, the same as in our English wood, with aconite, and saxifraga, with its intense white bells and kidney-shaped leaves. The crimson-blossomed crobus grows in the woods everywhere, with sweet veronica, meadow-sweet, the clustered bell-flower *Campanula glomerata*, little graceful snake-weed, and the hedge mustard. The handsome purple vetch decorates the banks and fields, toad-flax and purple meadow crane's-bill grow side by side with white campion; the big ox-eyed daisy flourishes everywhere in company of the mauve field scabius, crimson foxglove, and the little mountain pansy (*Viola lutea*).

To the Norwegian, however, above all these rank the fragrant *Linnæa borealis*, a small flower with little pink-white bells growing from the top of a long fine stem, with two or three small leaves towards the base. This is the national flower of Norway, and was named after Linnæus, the great botanist, who died in 1778. His arms are those now borne by the Linnæan Society of London. He selected this little plant to bear his name from a similarity, as he thought, between it and himself.

Wherever the conifers predominate they pretty well dislodge all plants that cannot grow in their shade, and in the spruce woods the flora is very deficient in species. It is the leafy mosses that form the carpeting *Hypnum*

splendens, *Schreberi* and triquetrum, with a small number of phanerogamous (or plants with visible flowers). The bilberry, for instance, is a characteristic plant in the spruce woods, and the whortleberry where grows the pine. Of these two berries the Norwegian woods are full, most of which are left untouched, as it does not pay to gather. There are some few species of *Lycopodium*.

In dry places where the soil is shallow are abundance of juniper, ling, and black crow-berry. These little shrubs are among the most easily contented plants in the Norwegian flora, and have a wide distribution over the whole country, from sea-level to high up on the mountains. Species of lichen also form an essential part of the vegetation. The reindeer moss (*Claudonia rangiferina*) is found all over the woods, especially on large stones and rocks, and on dry soil. In the pine woods it often gains the upper hand, covering the ground with a light grey carpet with its different species, and hanging from the branches of the spruce with long grey tresses.

In bogs the low growth is generally composed of sphagnum, and on the mounds grow sedges, ling, bilberry, blaeberry, and quantities of cloud-berries with their pretty and palatable orange-coloured fruit.

"The eider is a large marine duck, famous for its down, which, from its extreme lightness and elasticity, is in great request for filling bed-coverlets." The writer of the above had evidently not met the beautiful rugs made of the eider skins, not plucked (though they do this by themselves later), or he would without doubt have added the rug to the list of this famous duck's uses. The rugs are beautiful and quite a joy to an invalid because of their lightness and warmth, and while away

many a tedious moment, the thin weak hand wandering caressingly over and through the soft down of the breast that forms one side of the rug, whilst the back of the bird forms the other. The pretty pale sea-green patch that is only seen on the male's head when he has arrived at the age of full dress and fatherhood, forms a unique and pretty border. The rug deserves a line to itself, and so does the duck, because of the rug.

This bird generally frequents low rocky islets near the coast, and in Iceland and Norway has long been afforded every encouragement and protection, a fine being inflicted for killing it during the breeding season, or even for firing a gun near its haunts. Artificial nesting-places are in many localities contrived for its further accommodation. From the care it receives it has become exceedingly tame at its chief resorts, which are strictly regarded as property. The eider is rather clumsy, though it flies fast and dives admirably. The female is of a dark reddish brown colour barred with brownish black, the male when young being almost the same colour. The males keep apart in flocks by themselves till the third year, when they change their sober plumage to a pied plumage of sable beneath and a creamy white above, and the beautiful patch of sea-green that makes them eligible. The nest is generally in some convenient corner among large stones, hollowed in the soil, and furnished with a few bits of dry grass, seaweed, or heather, and by the time the five eggs are laid, the down is added. Then begins the robbing of the nest. The down and eggs are taken at intervals of a few days by the owner of the "eider-fold," and the birds are thus kept depositing both during the whole season. The duck is ultimately allowed to hatch an egg or two to keep up the stock, and the down from the

last nest is gathered after the birds have left the spot. The drake never goes near the nest, so that our feelings are not harrowed any longer at the thought of this sublime parent plucking his own breast. We can with an easy conscience snuggle under our eidys.

CHAPTER XIV

"A great while ago the world begun
With hay, ho, the wind and the rain."
SHAKESPEARE

AGES and ages ago, so long indeed that the human mind can hardly grasp the tremendous abyss which parts us from that distant time, the restless water rolled and tumbled. Perhaps it was very hot, for the world was new and the steam would hang heavy in clouds close down to the heaving waves. No doubt there were gales of wind with rain, lashing hail, flying spindrift, and boiling spume.

For untold thousands of years the old waters rolled untenanted, breaking on the islands and continents of those early days, washing them slowly away, and depositing the mud and ooze far away from shore in its secret depths. If you should wish to realise the enormous duration of this the earliest of geological periods, you have only to look upward at one of the great cliffs of Norway in which the lines of rock, which were once sediment, lie piled one upon the other for thousands of feet. These tell the long monotonous story of the eternal ocean slowly but surely washing away the dry land and storing up the silt, sand, and gravel in its bosom.

After ages the first simple forms of living creatures begin to appear in the soft mud. Possibly, only little

lumps of jelly like the protoplasmic atomic globule that Phoo Bah was so proud of being descended from. Or perhaps they were radiobes like those discovered by Mr. Burke. If that is the case, they did not die bachelors like those that appeared in his bouillon, but had large families and multiplied exceedingly. Eozoön is the name given by learned men to a shadowy sort of foraminifera supposed to have grown in thick sheets over the ancient sea-bottom that once spread far and wide where the land of Norway now is.

The water slowly became more shallow, beds of sand and gravel were laid down over the old ooze, and strange animals began to be evolved, simple in structure, but now known by terrible Greek and Latin names. These were *Dictyonema Norvegicum*, annelides (a sort of worm), brachiopods! corals! cnenoids! and sponges. Then came seventy-seven sorts of primordial king crabs called trilobites. One of these has been given the name of paradoxides. On land there were twelve species of plants, chiefly fucoids, but including some of higher grade called Eophyton, and all these went on flourishing through the long years, some few of them leaving traces in the mud and sand which afterwards hardened into solid rock.

By degrees an alteration came. Some of the old creatures died out, or very slowly changed into new shapes, and the period called Silurian brought other forms of life. Stone lilies, encrindes, starfish, and lamellibrinchs, but there were trilobites in great profusion still. Gradually the high mountains of the chain which stretches from the Naze to the North Cape were forced up into ridges and peaks, as our solid world cooled and shrunk. Granite and syenitic rocks pushed through the old sea-bottom, and besides these changes great

volcanoes were pouring thick lava streams and throwing showers of ashes. Dykes and great cracks in the earth were filled up with molten rock, and as the world still went on shrinking, the hard rocks of the earlier periods were crumpled and thrust into all sorts of contortions. Strange jagged peaks were forced up taking the most wild and awful shapes.

Here is Sir Archibald Geikie's description :—

"Enormous slices of the older rocks have been pushed horizontally over the top of much younger formations. In the country lying to the south-east of the mountain Sulitelma, Mr. P. T. Holmguist has mapped an important thrust plane over an area of nearly forty Swedish miles. It is so gently inclined that its outcrop winds up the valleys, and portions of the thrust rocks have been left by denudation as outlines. The effect of the dislocation is to place a series of mica-schists and granulitic quartzites (so-called Algonkian) above some of the oldest Cambrian strata which lie immediately on the Archæan gneiss and granite. If you arrange two packs of cards with all the aces, kings, and queens at the bottom to represent the older formations, and the lesser cards at the top to stand for the newer, you can by squeezing the packs together make the court cards override the commoners, and this will illustrate what took place in the mountains of Norway during Devonian times millions of years ago."

I daresay the whole face of the country was rather rough in those old days, but the weather has been acting on it ever since. The sun has scorched, the frost has split and chipped great icefields, and glaciers have ground, and smoothed, and polished, and scratched rounding mountain tops, and scouped out valleys and fjords. The ganoid fishes which swam in these old

waters have left scales, teeth, and bones which give us a notion as to what sort of creatures existed in the Devonian sea.

Time went on, and after the Old Red Sandstone came the Carboniferous period. There is only one small island—Andsen—in Norway which shows any trace of the great forests of tree-ferns, conifers, and giant horse-tails which flourished for so long in what is now England, France, and Germany. We may suppose that Norway stood up a tableland too high or too bleak for such a growth.

The Trias and the Jurassic times also came and passed away. All sorts of new creatures were evolved. Great lizards with fish-like flippers, Plesiosanns, long-necked and fierce, Megalosaurus, and other dreadful monsters filled the seas of the south. But there is no sign of them among the Norwegian mountains, though the lias of England shows their bones in great numbers. The rains of these days continued to wear down and furrow the softer parts of the Norse rocks; valleys were slowly eroded and mountain ridges splintered and sharpened. The age of Pleosau and Iguanodon followed, and afterwards came the time when the chalk slowly formed at the bottom of the open sea.

Then, in Eocene times, the last great epoch of mountain-making took place, and the Alps as we now know them were forced up and crumpled, flat sediments becoming huge mountain masses.

The Miocene and Pliocene, like the other ages, left the Norway rocks still standing high to the wear and chafe of rain, hail, and scorching sun. But the great Ice Age, which followed after, buried the whole country under 6000 or 7000 feet of solid glacier. Only the peaks of the highest mountains stood

like islands in the tremendous dome of solid frozen snow.

The enormous weight of the inland ice forced the surrounding glaciers outward in all directions. To understand how the dals and fjords were carved and worn out of the living rock, we must try to realise what was taking place all through this dreary period. Every scrap of ice was on the move. In every little valley, even in minute crannies between the rocky walls, the ice was creeping faster in the middle, slower at the sides. Everything in its way was either pushed along with the moving mass, or was slowly worn away, the hardest stone being scratched and polished.

Wherever the rain of old days had worn a chasm, the ice, with its moving granite boulders, rubbed and scored it deeper and wider. The under ice only pushed its way down the dals just as we see the shrunken glaciers of the present day. The eddies and backwaters in these races of tide made cataracts tumbling over steep cliffs or squeezing between narrow gorges. But this lower ice river was generally covered by another flow, pushing in quite another direction, sometimes even at right angles, so that, whilst the valley was being scored and plained in the direction of its windings, the peaks were grooved athwart the flow of the undercurrent by quite another stream. The force of the ice cap, and the distance it pushed great rocks and stones, seem almost incredible. At Laurwig there is a kind of syenite which is quite characteristic. Boulders of this very stone have been carried as far as Hamburg, right across Denmark, and even to Holderness in Yorkshire. Try to fancy the North Sea all packed with great icebergs breaking away from the giant glaciers of

Norway and drifting over to the country which we now call England.

The fjords, in some places 5000 feet deep, and the basins of great lakes, were hollowed in the same way, the detritus being carried hundreds of miles. All round the west coast of Norway there is to this day a long ridge of stone and gravel under the sea, a short distance from land. This is nothing but a line of moraine, where the old glaciers terminated in tall ice cliffs like those of Greenland or Spitzbergen. Indeed, the ice cap of north-east land, or the glaciers behind Prince Charles' foreland give us a very vivid picture of the appearance presented by Norway during the great Ice Age.

Some of the fjords have been worn to very great lengths and depths. Sogne Fjord, 136 miles long, is 4000 feet deep in places, and the telegraph cable which is laid across the Faerlands Fjord hangs in a great bight, instead of resting on the rocks below. The moving ice has in almost all cases rubbed the bottom flat with rounded sides, so that a section of the usual fjord is in the form of a great U. The pudding-like, smooth rocks called *roches moutonnées* in the Alps are common all over Norway. Often these give a very desolate and forbidding look to the scenery; not a blade of grass or sprig of birch is able to find a foothold in the polished surface; and the undulations stretch unbroken over many thousand acres.

Besides the great terminal moraine which underlies the sea all round the coast of Norway, the glaciers have dropped sand, gravel, and boulders in all sorts of situations. In some valleys one may meet rows of regular terraces, neatly sloping ridge behind ridge, for all the world like the fieldworks of some army of

giants. Often the sand is piled up into what in any other country might be called a respectable hill; and where the streams have washed away the foot, forming a cliff, one may notice the layers of deposition cutting in straight lines through the mass.

Then again, among countless clusters of rocky islands studded round the coasts, one may often find a ridge of shingle stretching right out as though a Titan had tried to throw a dam across the lake or fjord. In fact, there is not a valley in all Scandinavia which does not show traces of the tremendous forces at work during this long and dreary period.

There were men in those inclement days, for rude, stone weapons have been found in the caves they inhabited, in company with the bones of reindeer, bear, and woolly rhinoceros. Indeed, the cavemen of the mountains of Auverne have actually drawn pictures of the mammoth with his great curved tusks and long bristles. These have come down to our time, to show us how much the artist of that distant past could do merely by scraping his bit of ivory with a sharp stone. In the late Stone Age, Norway must have had a settled population, for the places where the old weapons were hammered and chipped into shape have been discovered. All along the coast, even far beyond the Arctic Circle, the great mass of flakes, and fragments of hard stone, and the numbers of finished and unfinished tools and scrapers, show that quite a wholesale manufacture was carried on.

It seems probable that Neolithic man in Norway lived mostly by hunting and fishing, though in the south, across the sea, there can be no doubt that cattle-breeding was also carried on. The stone weapons are in many cases quite beautiful in shape, and clearly show what skilful

workmen must have fashioned these flakes from the pebbles of flint sandstone or eruptive rock. In high latitudes another group of stone implements has been found. They are almost always of slate, and are also remarkable for their characteristic shape. The only kitchen midden from the Stone Age, yet found in Norway, only contained these so-called arctic stone implements. It is thought that these were the work of a different race, perhaps the forefathers of the Lapps. Indeed, the Lapps continued to use stone weapons down to quite historic times.

Leaving these, we come to the Vikings, whose weapons, found with their peculiar northern ornamentation and superb ring coats-of-mail, show the skill of the people in working iron. A great many of their early swords, and other weapons, were damascened, even as far back as the beginning of the Christian era. This shows either that this art was practised in the north long before its introduction into the rest of Europe from Damascus by the Crusaders, or, that the Norsemen were so far advanced as to be able to appreciate the artistic manufactures of southern nations.

The remnant of articles of clothing, with graceful patterns interwoven with threads of gold and silver, which have fortunately escaped entire destruction, show the existence of great skill in weaving. Entire suits of wearing apparel remain to tell us how some of the people dressed in the beginning of our era.

Beautiful vessels of silver and gold also testify to the taste and luxury of those early times. The knowledge of the art of writing and of gilding is clearly demonstrated. In some cases, nearly twenty centuries have not been able to tarnish or obliterate the splendour of the gilt jewels of the Northmen. We find among

their remains, either of their own manufacture or imported, perhaps as spoils of war, repoussé work of gold or silver, bronze, silver, and woodwork covered with the thinnest sheets of gold; the filigree work displays great skill, and some of it could not be surpassed now. Many objects are ornamented with *niello*, and of so thorough a northern pattern that they are incontestably of home manufacture. The art of enamelling seems also to have been known to the artificers of the period. A splendid collection exists in the Museum of Christiania and Bergen. And should anyone bent on visiting Norway first read and study Du Chaillu's *Viking Age*, he would find his interest in the country quadrupled.

One may fancy how, in very early days, tales were told over the fire, during the long winter nights. Dreadful stories exist of the Jötnar, who lived in the frost and snow, the giants, and the Thursar, or monsters. Some personified the most inimical of the forces of nature. Others, the world before it was formed—a chaos. They were older than the gods—these giants. The chief god, Odin, seems to have been much like Woden—the German All Father. Many were the tales of his son Thor, the special god of the Norsemen, who made war upon the Jötnar with his terrible hammer—Mjolnir the crusher, otherwise the thunderbolt. There were tales of Asgaard, the fortified city of the gods, where was the special home of all heroes,—Valhöll. Odin would ride through the air on his eight-footed steed Sleipnir the swift. His escort of maidens, on their white bare-backed horses, would hurry to the battle to choose the slain.

"Their horses shook themselves, and from their manes fell
Dew in the deep dales, and on the high hills hail."

There were besides these tales of the gods and the Valkyrie many stories of heroes. Siegfried of the Nibelungen legend is transplanted to Norway and called Sigurd. The Volsung Atila the Hun, called Etzel in German, in the eddas of Norway he becomes Atli.

Though songs were composed for hundreds of years it was not until the Vikings had made settlements in Ireland and the highlands of Scotland that the real school of poetry arose among the colonists. Mr. Powel calls it "a magnificent school which ran its course apart, and perished before the thirteenth century." There were dramatic and didactic poetry, dirges and battle songs, but there was one quality that the authors ever aimed at—melody of sound.

The Norse settlers in Ireland also spread north to Iceland, and even to Greenland, where the saga makes its appearance.

Mr. Powel says:—"The characteristics of this western school are no doubt the result of the contact of Scandinavian colonists of the Viking-tide, living lives of the wildest adventure, tossed by war and storm, with an imaginative and civilised race, that exercised upon them a very strong and lasting influence (the effects of which were also felt in Iceland, but in a different way). The frequent inter-marriages, which mingled the best families of either race, are sufficient proof of the close communion of Northmen and Celts in the ninth and tenth centuries, while there are in the poems themselves traces of Celtic mythology, language, and manners. The first Icelandic poets were very remarkable men, of good birth (nearly always too of Celtic blood on one side at least). They leave Iceland young, and attach themselves to the Kings and

Earls of the north, living in their courts as their henchmen."

The custom of having a court poet was of course taken from the Irish or the Highlanders, who from the very earliest days used to listen to songs of the bards. In Norway, about the time of Erik Blodöks, the son of Harald Fairhair, it was quite the thing to have a dark-haired, turbulent, adventurous Celt hanging about, who could dream wonders, and sing divinely.

"The best and earliest of the court poems are written in the old eddic metre and spirit, the same as those in which the best of the mythological poems are written," says Mr. C. F. Keary.

But the regular race of court bards who began in the time of King Haakon write in a new metre, and in a style which, as the ages go on, grows more and more affected and *précieux*. At last the scalds became little more than rhyming chroniclers of the deeds of the Kings. But Hornklof, Glum Geirason, Einar, and Halfred Vandraedaskald (called the troublesome bard) were more distinguished.

Some of the eddas give very weird pictures of the underworld. Sometimes some dead ancestor is summoned from the funeral mound to answer to questions. The hero Svipdag (or the daybreak) goes to rescue Menglöd, a fair lady who is guarded by a monster in a hall, girt round by flickering flames. On his way to the underworld he passes by the cairn of his mother, and calls to her—

> "Awake thou, Groa, awake, sweet lady,
> At the door of death I wake thee,
> Rememberest how thy son thou badest
> Unto thy cairn to come."

Then after asking him why he has called her who is

come to mould and is gone from the world of men, she teaches him charms to keep him safe on his journey.

Völuspâ is the most tremendous poem—a prophecy of the end of all things. When all living creatures on earth have perished of cold, the gods of Asgaard with the heroes of Valhalla come out to fight in the last great battle.

> "Swart grows the sunshine and no summer after;
> All the winds are death-winds."

Then the last day dawns. Egdir the grim sits on a funeral mound striking his harp. Fjalar the red cock crows, and his summons is answered by another from beneath the earth, the hell-hound bays fiercely, and breaks its fetters. Then the Jötunheim roar, How is it with the Æsir, How with the Alfar? and the dwarfs moan before their stony doors, Know ye what that betokens? This is the doomsday Rignavök. Odin fights with Fenvir the hell-hound; Thor fights with the great serpent who encircles the world; Frey fights the fire-god Surt, and at last when all gods and hell-hounds have been killed, then only the Death-flame stalks unhindered on the earth.

> "The sun darkens; the earth sinks into the sea.
> From heaven fall the bright stars.
> The fire-wind storms round the all-nourishing tree;
> The flame assails high heaven itself."

Besides the eddas, which were in verse, there were the sagas. These were at first handed down from father to son by word of mouth, for runes were only used for short inscriptions, and some of the sagas are as

long as a three-volume novel is in present day; like the best of the eddas, the sagas were produced by a race half Celtic and half Scandinavian.

About 870 A.D., Aud, Queen of Dublin, who was the daughter of a Norse King in the Hebrides, called Ketil Flatnose, made her way to Iceland with some of her granddaughters, and at last settled on a large territory. The doings of these early colonists and their descendants, who were looked upon as distinguished persons, have been handed down to us in the *Landnama-bok*—"The Book of the Settlement."

Mr. Keary compares these early travellers to the *Mayflower* emigrants, or the knickerbocker families, for they afterwards formed a sort of aristocracy in the island. Many other Irish and Highland settlers came, and gradually as there grew up in Iceland a race of story-tellers, saga-making became an art. How such long stories could be committed to memory alone is a wonder. They are full of minute details of all the life of that distant day—of the work on the farm, the hauling up of the ship, the tending of the herds, of the forms to be observed at the wooing of maidens, the casting of spells, or the exposition of the law. The whole is wrought with a wealth of vivid picturesqueness quite its own.

Holmsnega Saga—the adventures of a gang of outlaws in whalesfirth—is one of the earliest. Then there is Haensa Novis Saga, in which one of two rivals burns the other in his own house. Vatnsdaela Saga and Vapnfirdhinga Saga are both stories of blood-feuds. Indeed, the plot of most sagas turns upon either the rivalry of two heroes for the love of one woman, or the story of a blood-feud which is carried on between two families from generation to generation.

Burnt Njal is said to be the Icelandic Saga in its very finest development. It is very long-winded, and begins with the great-grandfathers and grandmothers of the principal characters; we hear of the loves and battles of many uncles and cousins, though the author is apt to get rid of those which are inconvenient or tiresome by saying suddenly, "And now, Vigu (or Glum, or whoever the distant relation happens to be) goes out of our story." Gunnar and Njal are fast friends, and have sworn that nothing shall make them quarrel, and this oath they keep till death; though Hallgerda, the wife of Gunnar (who by the way is a virago who has got rid of her first husband), is in bitter feud with Bergthora, the wife of Njal, and owing to the egging on of the two women the servants and herdmen of both friends are waylaid and killed from time to time. Whenever there is a fresh murder the crime has to be wiped out by a forfeit of money. We have a wonderful picture of this strange period, when in spite of the wholesale slayings and universal recognition of the duty of revenge, there is side by side a most intense love for law and order; for all crimes have to be discussed before the Thing or local parliament, and there the penalty is awarded.

Hallgerda, finding that she cannot stir up her husband to avenge the slights she supposes herself to have received from the family of Njal, at last works on Sigmund, an Easterling, who is staying in the house, to sing songs mocking the beardless carle, as she calls him, for Njal has no beard. He is reported to be throwing dung over his land, and Hallgerda asks why he does not cast some over his beard. To Njal's sons she gives the name of dung-beardlings.

The song is soon repeated by gossips to Bergthora,

the wife of Njal, and when her sons come into their supper, she speaks, "Gifts have been given you, father and sons, and ye will be no true men unless ye repay them somehow."

"What gifts are these?" asks Skarphedinn.

"You, my sons," says Bergthora, "have got one gift between you all. You are called 'dung-beardlings,' but my husband is the 'beardless carle.'"

"Ours is no woman's nature," says Skarphedinn, "that we should fly into a rage at every little thing!"

"And yet Gunnar was wroth for your sakes," says she, "and he is thought to be good-tempered. But if ye do not take vengeance for this wrong, ye will avenge no shame."

"The carline, our mother, thinks this fine sport," says Skarphedinn, and smiled scornfully as he spoke; but still the sweat burst out upon his brow and red flecks came over his cheeks (his ashen pale cheeks) such as was not his wont.

Grim was silent, and bit his lip. Helgi made no sign, and he said never a word. Hanskuld went off with Bergthora.

She came into the room again, and fretted and fumed much.

Njal spoke, and said, "'Slow and sure,' says the proverb, mistress; and so it is with many things, though they try men's tempers. There are always two sides to a story, even when revenge is taken."

But at even, when Njal was come into his bed, he heard that an axe came against the panel, and rang loudly. And there was another shut bed, and there the shields were hung up; and he sees that they are away. He said, "Who have taken down our shields?"

"Thy sons went out with them," says Bergthora.

Njal pulled his shoes on his feet and went out at once, and round to the other side of the house, and seeing that they are taking their course right up the slope, he said, "Whither away, Skarphedinn?"

"To look after thy sheep," he answers.

"You would not then be armed," said Njal, "if you meant that, and your errand must be something else."

Then Skarphedinn said, "We shall fish for salmon, father."

"'Twould be well, then, if it turned out so that the prey does not get away from you."

They went their way, but Njal went to his bed, and he said to Bergthora, "Thy sons were out of doors, all of them with arms, and now thou must have egged them on to something!"

"I will give them my heartfelt thanks," said Bergthora, "if they tell me the slaying of Sigmund."

Now Njal's sons went up to Fleetlith, and were that night under the lith, and when the day began they came near to Lithend. That same morning Sigmund and Skiolld rose up and meant to go to the stud-horses; they had bridles with them, and caught the horses that were in the farmyard, and rode away on them. They found the horses between two brooks. Skarphedinn caught sight of them, for Sigmund was in bright clothing.

Skarphedinn said, "See you now the red elf yonder, lads?"

They looked that way and said they saw him.

Skarphedinn spoke again. "Thou, Hanskuld, shall have nothing to do with it, for thou wilt often be sent out alone without due need. But I mean Sigmund for

myself; methinks that is like a man; but Grim and Helgi shall try to slay Skiolld."

Hanskuld sat him down, but they went till they came up to them. Skarphedinn said to Sigmund, "Take thy weapons and defend thyself; that is more needful now than to make mocking songs on me and my brothers."

Sigmund took up his weapons; but Skarphedinn waited the while. Skiolld turned against Grim and Helgi, and they fell hotly to fight. Sigmund had a helm on his head, and a shield at his side, and was girt with a sword. His spear was in his hand. Now he turns against Skarphedinn and thrusts at once at him with his spear, and the thrust came on his shield. Skarphedinn dashes the spearhaft in two, and lifts up his axe, and hews at Sigmund, and cleaves his shield down to below the handle. Sigmund drew his sword and cut at Skarphedinn, and the sword cut into his shield, so that it stuck fast. Skarphedinn gave the shield such a quick twist that Sigmund let go his sword. Then Skarphedinn hews at Sigmund with his axe the "Ogress of War." Sigmund had on a corselet. The axe came on his shoulder. Skarphedinn cleft the shoulder-blade right through, and at the same time pulled the axe towards him. Sigmund fell down upon his knees, but sprang up again at once.

"Thou hast lifted low to me already," says Skarphedinn; "but still thou shalt fall upon thy mother's bosom ere we two part."

"Ill is that, then," says Sigmund.

Skarphedinn gave him a blow on the helm, and after that dealt Sigmund his death-blow. Grim cut off Skiolld's foot at the ankle-joint; but Helgi thrust him through with his spear, and he got his death there and then. Skarphedinn saw Hallgerda's shepherd, just

as he had hewn off Sigmund's head. He handed the head to the shepherd, and bade him bear it to Hallgerda, and said she would know whether that head had made jeering songs about them, and with that he sang a mocking song on Hallgerda.

CHAPTER XV

SPITZBERGEN

IT would be in vain to attempt to convey in words an adequate idea of the beauty of the land-locked bay in which we found ourselves, after the two long days at sea. This arctic summer with its life of four months' continual daylight like some eastern fairy tale, set in a solitude in which all impressions become lasting. The weird spike-headed mountain-tops are dimly seen through the mists that slowly loose asunder, discovering peak after peak clothed with ice fronds to their summits. Each being hollowed out on the northern side, the basin thus made becomes filled with snow. The mountains follow one behind the other a succession of great solidified waves.

The sparkling east glacier is some three miles wide. The highest points of the mountains being thrust through its surface like islands in a sea of ice ; range after range rolling on, all of the same formation. Every now and then a report is heard echoing over the bay, as huge pieces of ice break off and fall into the water, leaving a patch of the purest green and blue on the wall-like face, the detached portions floating away in weird graceful shapes. On the south, the flower-strewn beach leads up to steep hills of shale, divided by a stream from the big moraine, pushed in front of the Fox glacier. Towards the west, Bell Mount and the placid waters of

Bell Sound sparkle and scintillate in the cold, bright sunlight. The air like that of Switzerland in winter is rarefied and keen.

Spitzbergen, this snow-clad cluster of islands, lost in the solitudes of the Arctic Ocean, is 400 miles away from the most northern point of Norway. It was nevertheless well known for at least four centuries to whalers and seal hunters. It is interesting to the whole of Europe, on account of the scientific expeditions for which it has been selected as a base for attempts to reach the North Pole. Here it was that Parry started in 1827 on the sledge journey which brought him to within 480 miles of the Pole; this the starting-point, too, of the investigations which led Charles Martins to his brilliant generalisations of the Flora, present and past, of the earth.

Spitzbergen really consists of six large and a great number of smaller islands. The biggest, West Spitzbergen, is shaped like a wedge pointing to the south, and is deeply indented by long branching fjords. If those who take an interest in charts will look, they will find that high mountains some 4560 feet above the sea on the Horn Sound cover its southern parts, while a wide plateau, covered by a thick ice-sheet, occupies the north. Several fjords, Horn Sound, Bell Sound, Ice Fjord (15 miles wide and 80 long), the double fjords of King's Bay and Cross Bay on the west, and the Liefde, Wiide, and Lomune Bays on the north, penetrate the island.

One of the ramifications of Dickson Bay, in the beautiful Ice Fjord, nearly reaches the head of the West Fjord in Wiide Bay, almost dividing the island. A long narrow island, called Prince Charlie's Foreland, with peaks rising to nearly 5000 feet high, runs parallel to a portion of the west coast of West Spitzbergen, from which it is separated by the barred channel of the

Foreland Sound. The broad Stor Fjord, or Wybe Jansz water, separates the main island from the others to the east, namely, Edge Island and Barents. A few bare peaks protrude above the snow and ice with which the mountains are covered.

On the north-east of Spitzbergen lies the Island of North Eastland, round which on the eastern and southern side runs a dotted line, showing that this inhospitable part of No Man's Land has never been explored. The last name to the north is Cape Leigh Smith, and on the south Cape Mohn. This island appears like a large plateau covered by an ice sheet 2000 to 3000 feet in thickness. This slowly moves towards the east and discharges into the sea by a huge ice wall some 150 miles long, forming the broadest glacier known.

It makes one think what a woeful place Northern Europe would be without the Gulf Stream. Up here after washing the shores of Norway and sending a branch to the east, the life-giving Gulf Stream flows to the western shores of Spitzbergen, leaving an open passage which permits the whaler to approach the coast even under the most unfavourable conditions of ice in the Arctic regions. Driftwood brought from lower latitudes, glass-floats of Norwegian fishermen, and even the large seeds of the *Eutada gigalobium* carried by the Gulf Stream from the Gulf of Mexico, are found at the northern extremity of Spitzbergen. Spring comes in June, and by the end of the month the thermometer has ceased to sink below the freezing point at night. July, August, and September are the best months. In September, autumn sets in on shore, though the whalers continue cruising until the end of the month, and even reach the highest latitudes. Then all is dark, and the glacier goddess resumes her sway.

On the 8th July started the steamship *Ile de France*, the passengers embarking at Dunkerque for a "croisière dans le monde polaire." The cover of the itinerary was decorated with a white bear holding a placard describing the most exciting events that might be expected during the voyage of thirty days. In the background were prowling bears stalking the roasting meats with outstretched paws, and lolling tongues; behind glimmered the glacier peaks. There were varied hunts. The prey was to consist of whales, reindeer, "au lagopède des Neiges," "aux petits échassiers et aux grands palimpèdes de l'océan boréal." Eider, bernache goose, arctic petrels, pigeons, cormorants, the scarce blue fox, and great seals of the ice-pack.

"Chasseresses ou non," the ladies were specially invited to take this cruise, for only on board this *Ile de France* would it be possible to make a voyage to Spitzbergen and the ice-pack with the amount of comfort that they very legitimately claimed. A very interesting cruise it must have been, and delightful too, to have Professor Nordenskjold as director of the scientific part of the voyage.

Wherever the *Vectis* steamed, the *Ile de France* had just left. Her name in giant letters of white was painted on the cliffs of the Naero Fjord. In Recherche Bay we inquired of the sailors on board the whalers, Had the *Ile de France* been there? Had the passengers shot any bears? "Yes," was the answer to the first question; "No," to the second. Had they caught any foxes? "No." It was not the season for either the one or the other.

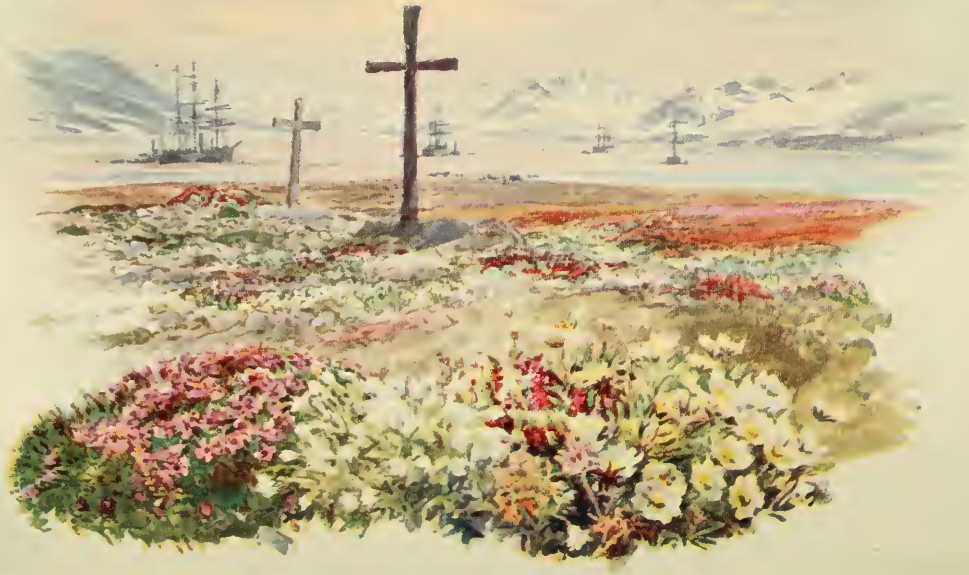
We landed and scaled the loose side of the moraine of the Fox Glacier. Nearing the top we were soon overlooking the long stretch of a partly melted surface of

sodden brown half-frozen ice, seamed by great cracks which extended in all directions over the surface, a perfect picture of a desolation where foot of man has never trod. Something glittered among the stones: the brass head of a new cartridge, a real trace of the phantom ship and its hardy hunters. Had this particular sportsman sat there long in his thick cloak with its pointed hood? Had he been well armed? Was he alone? Did he, as I did, feel a little afraid and constantly look over his shoulder, expecting the bear, that might be hungry even in summer when during this perpetual day it is so difficult to remember how long ago the dinner had been, and how soon breakfast might be due? Yes, here was one cartridge, and a little farther on another, with the mystic words, "Cartouche pour poudres au bois pyroseylé sans long feu *Ste Fse* des munitions, Paris." I have my trophy in company of many scraps of Jurassic stone, mosses, flowers, and slips of whalebone, to which I have since added a short cutting from a Norwegian newspaper:—

"The great tourist steamer *Isle de France* has returned to Tromsö from Spitzbergen. Outside Red Bay, on the northern corner of the island, the steamer ran aground on a hidden shoal at a rate of twelve miles an hour. After twenty-four hours' waiting, a little Norwegian steamer *Express* arrived, and was despatched with a message to the Dutch cruiser *Friesland*, which was lying in Widje Bay. *Friesland* arrived next day, and succeeded in drawing the steamer off the shoal. The passengers showed their gratitude by a collection on board, which brought in 13,000 francs for distribution among the *Friesland's* crew."

Yes, certainly, these passengers had braved all risks!

The carcasses of whales denuded of their blubber,



GRAVES OF NORWEGIAN WHALERS, KECHERCHE BAY

and all that can be made use of, lie stranded at the edge of the tide, emitting a horrible, choking smell. Lucky is the man or woman who has cigarettes or tobacco to smoke, or chocolate to eat, anything to palliate the offensive odour.

Up the slope are the graves of the unfortunate fellows who have died on the whalers, and lie buried on this inhospitable coast. There are two lank, worn wood crosses, renewed by the men of H.M.S. *Callipso* in 1895. The scant moss and débris of grey loose planks lie about amongst big scattered stones, as if the forces of nature, or perhaps more likely the polar bears, had tried to disturb the resting-place of these poor bones.

From a short distance away the land looks barren, as though no flowers existed, but a few steps up the grey pebble beach the foot sinks into a springy moss that covers the foreshore in rings some five feet across. In winter the snow lies in innumerable mounds, which on the approach of summer naturally first melt round the rim, where flowers immediately spring up. The central portion of the snow mound not melting till late in the summer season, leaves behind a bare, barren, circular patch, bleached and grey like the ashes of a dead fire. These barren circles enclosed by the polar vegetation looked on as a whole have a most peculiar effect, and one to be seen nowhere else.

During a walk of a few hours some twenty different species of plants were collected by one of the passengers, all blooming and making the most of their short summer. The prettiest, I think, was *Dryas actopetala*, with its cream-coloured fleshy leaves and brilliant yellow centre, which strewed the shore plentifully. Every here and there small stunted tufts of yellow or white Iceland poppies grew. Great cushions of saxifraga, thickly starred

with crimson blossom, produced a purple tint visible from a long way off. Others of the same family had pale pink petals, deep crimson centre, and large corolla. There were more of the same tribe common to similar situations, flowers nearly sessile grew on low dense tufts of radical leaves; also saxifraga five to six inches in height, sturdy with thick stems and greenish flowers in a compact spike, in company of a little delicate white flower with petals like our English milk-wort. The leaves of the latter are a pale green, and very close together, and the flower has an exceedingly sweet smell. *Silene acantis* and *Moss campion* were abundant, also *Oxyria reni-fermis.*

The bard who sang of "hanging his harp on a willow tree" would have been nonplussed could he have seen these little polar mites. The only tree in Spitzbergen is a willow. It is not more than two inches high, with but a few tiny leaves. On the higher slopes, 1500 feet above the sea, the poppies *Luzula hyperborea* and *Stellaria Edwardsii* are occasionally met with. Mosses, mostly European acquaintances, cover all places where peat has accumulated. The slopes of the crags and the blocks of stone on the beach are sometimes entirely covered with a luxuriant moss and lichen vegetation, among the last being the so-called "famine bread," *Umbilicaria arctica*, which has maintained the life of so many arctic travellers.

Flowering plants are represented by as many as ninety-six species, of which eighty-one grew in Greenland, and sixty-nine in Scandinavia; forty-three species are Alpine cosmopolites, and have been met with on the Himalayas. According to Mr. Naathorst's researches in 1882, the flora of Spitzbergen is composed as follows:— "Rosaceæ, 7 species; Saxifrageæ, 10; Salix, 2; Compositæ, 5; Seraphulariaceæ, 2; Ericacea, 2; Gramineæ,

23; Cyperaceæ, 12; Juncaceæ, 6; Filices (Fern), 2; Lycopodiaceæ, 1.

"The whole of this flora immigrated during the post-glacial period, which was warmer than the present. Although thus limited in number, the flora is suggestive in its distribution. The vegetation of the south has a decidedly Lappish or European Alpine character, while that of the north coast is decidedly American, and recalls that of Melville Island. Many flowering plants which are common in north-west Spitzbergen are absent from the east coast, where the cold current is inimical to both flora and fauna; but, on the other hand, one moss (*Poltia hyperbarea*) and one lichen (*Usnea melascautha*) are found there which are of American origin, and grow both in North America and on the Cordilleras."

Our stay in Recherche Bay was a most opportune moment for seeing and hearing all about the whale fishery. The *Vectis* had let go her anchor in the centre of the bay, in the best possible position for seeing the beauties of the Fox and East Glaciers. The towering Jurassic mountains rose all round. Some way ahead lay four sailing whalers, with their attendant small steamers, each with a crow's nest at the top of the foremast, and a harpoon gun in the bow. The crews of larger vessels were all hard at work, cutting up the whales that lay alongside. Other fish were moored astern, awaiting their turn; poor blown-out things! they looked like clincher-built boats turned bottom up. Thousands of birds were settling on them and screaming all round. It was possible to borrow a small boat from the ship in the cause of art, to make a tour of the whalers and gather information.

At first sight it was all horrible, and the smell till well to windward, terrible. The men in the first ship were just stripping off the blanket-pieces, one end of which

was hooked on to a rope which was hauled gently up to the yardarm; the men dexterously and very neatly cut off the long strips of blubber with very sharp slightly-curved knives on long wooden handles. The whole surface of the whale was so horrid and slippery that the men had continually to rub their hands in, and sprinkle sand on the carcass to enable them to stand. It did not take more than fifteen minutes to strip one side of the whale, and the whole was then slowly turned by a line passed under the body and a hook put through the skin of the belly and then parbuckled by the winch.

All the time the fulmar flew round screaming and settling, tearing at the flesh and disputing the proprietorship of the poor dead mammal with the workers. The crimson water round the ship was covered by thousands of these fluttering, fighting petrels. They stretched away astern in the tide as thick as they could pack, so gorged and heavy that they fluttered along the surface of the water for yards without being able to rise. To my mind the birds made a horrible exhibition of themselves, and quite did away with the delightful fascination the ordinary herring gull is wont to inspire.

Yarrell, in his book of British birds, gives much interesting information about the fulmar petrel. He writes that it is only a winter visitor to the more southern parts of our own coast, but is a herald of polar regions, meeting the ships, as, indeed, it did ours on approaching Spitzbergen. Here its colonies cover the cliffs in company of the glacous gull. The fulmar breeds on the face of the highest precipices, but only on such as are furnished with small grassy shelves. It makes a mere shallow excavation in the turf, lined with dried grass, in which the bird deposits a single egg of a pure white colour. The young of the bird are thickly covered

with long white down, are very clamorous when handled, and in their excitement vomit a quantity of clear oil. The old birds have the same nasty habit, which one might imagine would greatly disconcert an amateur sportsman, more especially as the oil, which is of a clear amber colour, does not smell nice. The bird, its young, and even the rock which it frequents, have a peculiar and a very disagreeable odour. Fulmar oil is one of the most valuable productions of St. Kilda.

The fulmar from afar scents the whaler, and joins the ship immediately on passing the Shetland Islands, and accompanies it through the trackless ocean to the highest accessible latitudes. It keeps an eager eye for the smallest particle of fatty substance, and when carrion is scarce, these vulture-like gulls follow the living whale, and often by their peculiar motions, hovering at the surface of the water, point out its direction to the fishermen. Luckily they cannot make much impression on the whale till man or some more powerful animal tears away the blubber. This bird has a cruel bill, shaped like that of a parrot. The young birds have white heads and brownish coloured backs and wings, very like the colour of the young swan. The older birds change to pure white head and breast and grey back, the same colour as our ordinary grey gull. I have spoken here of the fulmar at such length owing to the fact that all on board our ship were so interested and rather horrified at the goings on of these voracious birds, and I am sure that Spitzbergen will ever be associated in our minds with the fulmar.

We pulled away past the steamer to a barque of about 700 tons, astern of which were four carcasses of whales. The harpoon was still sticking in the flesh of one of them, and from it a stream of blood oozed, staining the water

crimson. Here again the fulmar fought and jostled, snapping in the greasy mixture. As we approached the ladder, we noticed that the whole of the waterline of the barque was thickly coated with a layer of grease. The steps were also covered, and the hand-rope felt almost like a tallow-dip. The decks were black and all the poop lumbered with oil barrels. Just abaft the mast were the great cauldrons into which a strange engine, not unlike a mud-dredger in shape, poured a continuous stream of blubber, cut into lumps about a foot square. A hot, greasy smell pervaded everything. Just at this moment the gory carcass of a whale, from which the head, tail, fins, and every scrap of fat had been cut, was cast adrift, and floated away, the centre of a screaming cloud of fulmar.

The forecastle of the barque was piled up high with the relics of the poor dismembered monster. Jaw-bones, fins, and great strips of blubber, some ten to fifteen feet long, were being sorted, and carved into squares. Three men in overalls dragged them hither and thither with iron hooks, stamping and sliding over the elastic and slippery surface of the pile. The squares of fat were flung down into the waist, where the aforesaid engine was cutting away with knives of the very finest steel. "Diamond steel," said one of the greasy crew. It must be hard, for now and then the knife meets with bits of the shell which gives the *coup de grace*. This bomb explodes when the poor whale dives, stung by the harpoon. From the knives of this giant sausage machine, the cubes of blubber were caught in buckets which hung on an endless chain, these carried them up over a wheel, and turning a somersault pitched them right into the steaming cauldrons.

"How long have you been a whaler?" the man was

asked who was doing the honours of the ship. "Oh, I only come this cruise. We got here the middle of May." "When do you leave?" "Oh, the middle of August; after that, all ice here. There is two whaling steamers, and one tugboat to each ship," he said. "Dey goes long way sometimes. Very few fish this year. Dey kill them all. No, dey not all fresh, sometimes dey pick up a dead one, that has been wounded, but has got away. What did I sail in before? Oh, I carries fruit from West Indies. The three-masted schooner? Oh, she is a collier, bring coal from England. No, she don't carry oil; they pick up the bones along the shore, carry dem to Stavanger; they grind dem up." Our friend showed us samples of the whalebone, saying it was worth £180 a ton, and that it was used in the manufacture of silk.

The fauna of Spitzbergen, although not very rich in species, is exceedingly rich in individuals. It includes fifteen mammals, only two of which are terrestrial—the reindeer and the ice-fox—besides the usual inhabitant of the Arctic regions, the polar bear. The number of reindeer is really puzzling. In a single summer, or rather in the course of a few weeks, no fewer than from 1500 to 2000 reindeer were killed by hunters for several consecutive years previous to 1868. Much emaciated in June, they grow very fat towards the end of the autumn, after feeding on the mosses. Great numbers are "marked" (that is, have both ears cut at the same height), and the hunters were persuaded that these individuals came from an unknown continent in the north-east, where they had been marked by the hand of man; but Sir Martin Conway discredits this notion, and, indeed, it seems difficult to believe that reindeer could pass over the hundreds of miles of ocean separating Spitzbergen from any other land.

Eight Cetaceans are met with in the seas of Spitzbergen (*Balænaptera boops*), 80 to 110 feet long. I do not think the one we saw was more than 70 feet, judging from the size of a man alongside; *B. gigas* and *B. rostrata*, 30 feet long; the white whale (*Beluga caladon*), two of which we saw towed in with one big *Balænaptera boop* and two *B. gigas*, about 30 and 20 feet long. All hurried on deck to see this wonderful tow pass; the tug steaming slowly along advanced with this long line of dead whales. One of them had a thing waving about in the air like a great transparent balloon bigger than the whale itself. I think we all felt a little sad to see these great unprotected carcasses float slowly by, blown out to quite an indecent size, an unmerited contemptuous treatment for these great harmless mammals. The balloon, I found, was the air which had entered the tongue. A tube is inserted from the tug, and the whole is blown full of air to make it tow more easily.

The setting to this forlorn group was most beautiful. The sky a soft pale transparent yellow, reflected on the great Fox Glacier, suffusing it with the same light, leaving its steep sides in cold blue and purple shadow. The water of the bay, who can describe it? The glassy transparent water had the colour and fire of an opal, with every here and there upstanding many-coloured miniature icebergs shaped like strange ice flowers. The whales were the only Cetaceans we saw, though other bays in this archipelago are populated with crowds of walrus and Greenland seals.

Besides the fulmar and glacous gull (*Larus glaucus*), or the "burgomaster," of which I have already written, there are also black guillemots, that drive and scurry away when the launches come too close, ivory gulls, kittiwake gulls; while geese, looms, and snipe swarm on

THE WHALER'S HARPOON, SPITZBERGEN

and about the lagoons and small fresh-water ponds. The bernacle goose is only a bird of passage, as it goes farther north-east to nest. The eider breeds in large colonies on the islands, where its young are safe from the ice-fox, only the glacous gull and the brent goose being admitted to keep them company, while the lumme and the tern confine themselves to separate cliffs. These birds, however, are only guests in Spitzbergen, the snow bunting being the only species which stay permanently; twenty-three species breed regularly on Spitzbergen, and intermittently four others—the falcon, snow-owl, swan, and skua.

After a short sleep, we were awakened about half-past seven by an unusual sound, a sort of lapping, and looking out of the port we saw that the calm surface of the bay was alive with a perfect army of fulmar advancing slowly in line. Each bird seemed to stir the water with its feet as it advanced, sipping in the waves as though there were food of some sort in them,—the noise of such a multitude of creatures feeding was most strange. One was somehow reminded of the rippling sound made when the chorus at the Albert Hall turns those countless pages of music all at once.

When we came on deck we found that the first officer, who had been with the purser on a shooting trip to Axel Island whilst we were all asleep, had returned. They had come upon a camp of some sort, and skeletons of bears and men were lying on the barren shore. They brought back a sextant made of oak. A proper sextant, though rough to look at. It would be quite possible to take an observation with it, if you knew how much to allow for the error of the instrument.

What a dismal picture one conjures up of the deserted camp, and unburied bones surrounded by

great glaciers and stranded ice-floes. Besides the sextant, the party brought back an arctic tern, a sweetly pretty little white creature, with sharp-pointed bill and bright scarlet feet, and some of Richardson's skua, black-backed birds with hooked beaks and white breasts.

It seems strange at first to have the sun always in the sky. We had an argument with some of the passengers as to how high it was at midnight, and at last the captain went and fetched his sextant and shot the sun for us. It turned out to be eleven degrees above the horizon. There is a sort of rosy tint in the sunlight most of the time, and the distant snow peaks have quite a pink glow as they peep up out of the haze, then the earth is reddish, and the moss that springs up whenever the snow has melted away has quite a crimson lake and burnt sienna sort of a tint, so that in spite of the great blue glaciers the scene is not all cold and white. The bright scarlet bodies of the poor skinned whales, which drift by at intervals, also give a touch of colour, and the transparent glassy tint of the mountains in shadow is most wonderful with an unearthly beauty all its own.

We were very comfortable all the next day after leaving Recherche Bay. The mist had enveloped our surroundings, but the sea was calm. One small fishing-boat had emerged right in our path, about the time of daybreak in ordinary latitudes. The air was chilly and damp, but in the music-room all was comfort and warmth. One knot of people were busy painting arctic birds; another knot, arctic flowers. Some were reading, others talking of their greenhouses and gardens at home, being reminded of flower after flower at the mere sight of one's dish full of flowering mosses. These few long days at sea made fast friends of many people. All

were on the *qui vive* for the first sight of the pack-ice. On deck the air was cold, very cold, so that we could not be far off. First one little scrap, then another of transparent green ice floated by, then more, little lumps and hummocks. The ship slowed; and as she did so the fog began to lift, and continued lifting as we slowly forged ahead. The small lumps passed more rapidly every moment; then the mist lifted, and right in front of us was the limitless Ice-Pack reaching away as far as the eye could see. Only fancy if the *Fram* could have been coming out of the pack at that moment, there were we in latitude 80° 24′ N., and she came out a little north of 80°; but the *Sisters of Tromso*, a whaler, was the vessel in luck that time. Opening Nansen's *Farthest North* at haphazard I came across the passage: "The world that shall be! . . . Again and again this thought comes back to my mind, I gaze far on through the ages."

"*Monday, April 30th.*—Drifting northwards. Yesterday observations gave 80° 42′, and to-day 80° 44½′. The wind steady from the south and south-east." "It is lovely spring weather. One feels that spring-time must have come. . . ." Then again, "Every night I am at home in my dreams, but when the morning breaks I must again, like Helge, gallop back on the pale horse by the way of the reddening dawn, not to the joys of Valhalla, but to the realm of eternal ice." Much longing, it seems to me, is in the words.

Hummocky ice stood up in all kinds of shapes, the standing pieces a bright green, with every now and then a patch stained by either ironstone, or the bed of some Siberian river. We steamed round the edge of the pack some four to five hundred yards from it, and noticed that the ice had a slight pink tinge with trans-

parent blues and greens against a tender pale sky, the ice merging into the sky. We turned and headed south, the low ice dispersing very soon. All, as usual, had been thought of, and above the first item on the menu at lunch was July 25th, Ice Pack, Lat. 80° 24,′ Long. 4° 50′.

In the afternoon we again sighted Spitzbergen. The mountains, with the sun shining on the pink snow, came into view in a long line under a thick grey cloud, which slowly rose, leaving the most beautiful clear green sky. All the afternoon the peaks passed in procession great snowfields and glaciers, while the mountains, hollowed into basins, were filled with snow, and rising from inside the basin, round the sides, were ice and snow, like the beautiful fern patterns that one sees in winter on the window-pane.

We had a concert in the evening, which lasted till half-past ten. It was bright daylight still, a lovely soft yellow light over all. The sea like glass reflected the soft colour on the surface, and the ripple from the ship's bow broke in little billows of the most lovely sapphire blue. A tall girl, with a figure like a goddess, and a glorious crown of golden hair, was singing. The voices in the music-room were stilled to listen, as her clear notes rose higher and higher. All the time the marvellous ice-peaks of Prince Charles's Foreland were slowly passing, each one framed by the porthole, transparent and clear, the colour of opals. Those peaks! those lovely peaks! and the voice went on, and the peaks glided by, both leaving an impression that will never fade.

It was late in the summer when the *Vectis*, with the Vecti on board, decided to cross the North Sea to the coast of Britain. All on board of the ship wondered if Ægir and Ran, the god and goddess of the sea, and their

daughters, would show themselves in ugly mood on their way home. Having cruised all along the fjords of Norway from Christiania to the polar ice, they had imbibed many new beliefs, as was natural when visiting the halls of the dead, and treading the soil held for so long by the sons of Odin.

The Vecti believed as of old, that those who were drowned at sea went to Ran; those who died by weapons went to Valhalla; and those who died a natural death in their beds or chairs went to Hel. What happened to those who died of the movement of the sea is not known. The seafaring people worshipped Ægir, for he governed the sea and wind. Ran, his wife, received well all shipwrecked people in her hall at the bottom of the sea, and had a net with which she caught men who came out to sea; drowned men were sure to be welcomed by her.

The Wind and the Fire are the brothers of Ægir. The Wind is so strong that he moves large oceans, and stirs up his brother the Fire. Ægir and Ran have nine beautiful daughters who live in the sea, and the waves are named after them. These daughters often go three together, and the winds awake them from their sleep. They are not partial to men, and are always seen in storms. All had names emblematic of the waves. They are called Himingloefa, the Heaven glittering; Dufa, the Dove; Blodughadda, the Bloody-haired; Helfring, the Hurling, or Heaving; Ud, the Loving; Hrönn, the Towering; Bylgja, the Billowing, or Swelling; Bara, the Lashing; Kolga, the Cooling. Ægir and Ran were not to let this mighty vessel go home quietly.

The ship was hardly out of sight of land when the sky became dark and threatening, the clouds hung low and moved with great rapidity, the wind kept increasing in violence, the waves rose higher and higher, and the

North Sea was like a sheet of white foam. The *Vectis* rode over the waves as if she were a seagull, and was so easily steered that the people believed and declared that she understood the human voice. From the south-west, the wind shifted suddenly to the north-west, and alternate gusts of wind and rain followed each other in quick succession.

"It is good," suddenly exclaimed the Doktor, "that no man knows his fate beforehand; his mind is thus free from anxiety and sorrow." "The day was fine this morning," answered Thomasson, "but, after all, a day should be praised at night, a woman after she is buried, a sword after it is tried, ice when it has been crossed over, and a voyage after it is ended."

"Those are wise sayings," replied the Doktor; and as the *Vectis* was ploughing her way fast through the waves, he said to Thomasson, "Tell me of those sea-maidens who wander over the sea, and pass their lives in doing harm to many men."

"Those maidens are the daughters of Ægir and Ran," replied Thomasson; "they are evil-minded, and slay men; they are seldom gentle to us seafaring people, and the wind arouses them from their sleep, and they look angrily at the ships sailing over the sea."

"Who are the maidens," asked the Doktor again, "who walk over the reefs, and journey along the fjords and shores? These white-hooded women have a hard bed, and make little stir in calm weather."

Thomasson replied: "These are billows and waves, daughters of Ran. They lay themselves on skerries; their beds are the rocks, and the calm sea stirs them not; but lo, when the wind blows hard, it rouses their anger, and they send the men that are on the deep to Ran, their mother."

"I fear," said the Doktor, "by the look of the sky, that we are going to meet Ægir and Ran and their daughters erelong in their angry mood."

The wind kept increasing. "The brother of Ægir, who stirs the ocean," said the foster-brother, "wishes to see what kind of men are on board of the *Vectis*; for, as thou seest, the sea is becoming mountain high." Then the Doktor, who was looking at the wake made by the ship, said to Thomasson, "who are those white-helmeted maidens that I seem to see yonder? They are dressed in white, have frowning looks, their breasts heave with passion, and they are coming fast towards the *Vectis*."

"Those are three of the daughters of Ægir and Ran, and by their size and fierceness must be Hrönn, Bylgja, and Hefring; let us beware of them, for their anger is in their looks; they are coming rapidly toward us, and I think they mean us harm."

Thomasson had hardly uttered these words when there dashed a wave so strongly against the *Vectis* that it made her shiver from stem to stern; it was Hrönn, they fancied, that had come against the ship. Then another wave followed and hit the great ship on her bows; it was Bylgja. Right after Bylgja, in the wink of an eye, came another wave that swamped the deck of the ship and flung four men down. The wind shifted, and the ship was driven toward the dangerous coast of Britain, and came in sight of a large island with great white cliffs hanging over the sea. The storm seemed then to be at its height. "Witchcraft moves the storm," cried Thomasson, "and we had better sail under the lee of the island, for we cannot contend with Ægir, nor Ran, and their daughters."

During the night the storm abated, and towards morning the Vecti thought they saw nine Valkyrias,

helmet-clad and with shining spears, riding in the air over their ship, and then the storm ceased. "They have come to protect us and hush the storm; the decree of the Nornir in regard to our death is not yet to be fulfilled."

Entering the mouth of the Thames, they steamed slowly up, and, arriving at Gravesend, the anchor was let go, the Vecti returned each to his home with much spoil in skins, beautiful gold filigree, enamel work, and many fine embroideries.

INDEX

AANDALSNAES, 178, 179
Abel, Nils, 36
Acropolis, 29
Act, Conscription, 219
Adderoen, 56
Adrian VII., 39
Ægir, 303
Æsir, 279
Akershus, 33
Akersvik, 39
Albans, St., 39
Alfax, 279
Alumanniæ, Hansa, 114
Amt, 73
Amtmand, 37, 39
Anastasius, 39
Angantyrs, 13, 14, 15
Animals, Wild, 251
Anlestael, 188
Archer, Colin, 48, 50
Arctic Circle, 223
Argonaut, 174
Arne, Björnson, 86, 180
Arngrim, 13
Art, Museum of, 17
—— Norwegian, 25
Asgaard, 276
Atlantis, 262
Attenburg, Maria Cornelia, 51
Aud, 280
Auflemsfjeld, 169, 171
Axel, 64

Baade, Knud, 19
Bach, 29, 30, 80
Bache, Walter, 129
Baedeker, 66
Bakke, 63, 151
Bakke-Elv, 152
Balænaptera boops, 298
Balholm, 154, 160, 161, 166
Bandak, Lake, 52
Bara, 303
Barents, 288
Barnett, J. F., 129
Bastio, Isle of, 7
Bautasten, 57
Bautastenar, 5
Bears, 50, 259
Bele, King, 161, 164
Bennatter, Mr., 57
Bensjordtend, 231
Berg, Magnus Elisen, 18
Bergen, 29, 62, 102, 104, 109, 113, 120, 144, 168
—— Bishop of, 64
Bergthora, 281, 282, 283
Berlin, 21
Björgen, 186
Björnson, 21, 22, 24, 35, 37, 46, 79, 86, 107, 128, 130, 186, 188, 189, 257
Björvik, 33

Callipso, 291
Canal, Nordsjo-Skien, 52
Cape Leigh Smith, 288
—— Mohn, 288
—— North, 240
Capellen, Georg, 128
Cappelen, Herman August, 21
Cariole, 146
Carlsruhe, 21, 27
Centaurs, 31
Charles, Prince, 218, 273, 302
Christian III., King, 216
Christian IV., King, 64

Christiania, 7, 8, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45
Christiansand, 53, 55, 56, 257
Christie, Mr. H., 193
—— Stiftamund, 253
Church, Vor Frelsers, 30
Clubfoot, Baron, 64
Crane, 94
Cratch, Mr. W. D., 262
Colbran, 105
Collet, Frederik, 24
"Confession, The Condemned Man's," 38
Constantinople, 36
Conway, Sir Martin, 297
Copenhagen, 27, 29, 30
Cottell, Mr. R., 262
"Couple, A Solitary," 20
Court Poet, 278
Cuyp, 17

Dahl, 18, 65, 221
—— Fru, 164
—— Johan Christian, 17
Dalen, 17
Dals-Elv, 135
Dannreuther, Edward, 129
Dairies, Co-operative, 157
Death, Black, 36
De Beriot, 105
Deer, 241
De Hooch, 17
Denmark, 39, 56, 64, 73
Devonian Times, 270
Ditten, Wibe, 64
Doktor, 304, 305
Dovre, 155
Dow, Gerard, 17
Drobeck, 7
Dryas actopetala, 291
Du Chaillu, 72, 138, 161, 196, 276.
Dufa, 303
Dusseldorf, 19, 21
Dydril, Thorkel, 92

Earl, 64
East Glacier, 293
Eddas, 278, 279
Edinburgh, 40
Edsvaag, 22
Egdir, 279
Eide, 69, 74, 140
Eider, 265
Eidsvold, 30, 37, 40
Eidsvoldthing, 71
Eidsvoldwark, 38
Einar, 278
Ekeberg, 33
Ekersund, 56
Elfdal, 181
Elgin, Lord, 28
Elk, 260
Elphinstone, 128
Elv, Skiens, 52
Ender, Axel, 24, 184
England, 42, 73
English Fleet, 74
Eozoön, 269
Erik Blodöks, 208, 278
Erika, 36
Erlingsson, Magnus, 215
Espelandfos, 70
Eugenius, 39
Evanger, 135
Everdingen, 17
Exhibition, Jackson, 50

Faio, 62
Faerder-Fyr, 4
Faestningsbrygge, 118
Faged, 73
Faleida, 168
Farsund, 56
Fauna of Spitzbergen, 297
Fearnly, 19
Fele, Norwegian, 80
Fenvir, 279
Fikensensand, 63
Fiksensund, 81
Fin, Farm of, 140, 142
Finck, Mr., 104
Finland, 246
Finnegaarden, 112
Finneloft, 140, 141
Firdafylke, 167
Fjaerland, 173
Fjalar, 279
Fjeld Finns, 240
Fjord, 4, 44, 141
—— Aurlands, 145, 154
—— Bolstad, 135

Fjord, Bömmelö, 60
—— Bukke, 55
—— Christiania, 4
—— Daviks, 168
—— Drammen, 7
—— Eid, 71
—— Eyds, 168
—— Fjaerlands, 155
—— Graven, 74, 75
—— Hardanger, 62, 63, 72
—— Helgeraar, 50
—— Hundviks, 168
—— Is, 168, 178
—— Langesand, 50
—— Mauranger, 63, 66, 67
—— Melanger, 230
—— Molde, 178, 181
—— Naerö, 140, 144, 145, 152, 154, 167, 170, 289
—— Nord, 168
—— Romsdal, 178, 182
—— Sandesogns, 7
—— Sogne, 72, 145, 167, 273
—— Solberg, 230
—— Sör, 69, 71, 134
—— Stavanger, 69
—— Stor, 288
—— Trondhjem, 148, 246
—— Ult, 168
—— Utne, 71
—— Vaags, 230
Fladager, 30
Fleelith, 283
Fleet, Dano-Norwegian, 217
—— English, 74
Flora of Spitzbergen, 292
Flydal, Farm of, 177
Flydalsbrae, 177
Flydalshorn, 174
Fokstuen, 181
Folgefond, 63, 65, 66, 69, 70
Folgefondfjeld, 65
Fogderi, 73
Formanskab, 73
Fox Glacier, 289, 293, 298
Fram, 48, 50, 250
Frederick VI., 37
Fredrikshald, 5
Frey, 279
Frich, J. C. G., 19, 33
Friedricks, 19
Friesland, Dutch cruiser, 290
Frithjof, 144
Frognersaeter, 34

Gaad, 45
Gaard, 112, 115
Gaard, Suphelle, 157
Gade, Karl Joans, 37
—— Niels W., 130
Gaden, Carl Johans, 91
—— Jordenskjolds, 56
—— Storhammer, 40
—— Strand, 40
Ganger, 85, 141
Garden, University, 17
Gefle, 181
Geikie, Sir A., 270
Geiranger, 174, 177
Geirason, 278
Gerhard, Marchus, 65
Germany, 56
Gi Sund, 230
Gjerde, 66
Glafin, 278
Glencoe, 180
Glommen, 38, 181
Gloppons, 168
Glosimodt, Olaf Olafsen, 30
Glutton, 260
Görbitz, Johan, 19
Gosse, 120
Grande, 178
Graven, 81
Graveyard, 108
Greenland, 41, 298
Greigh, General, 128
Grieg, Alexander, 128
—— Edvard, 36, 84, 104, 107, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 133
—— Madame, 125, 126, 127
Grim, 282, 284
Grimstad, 51, 52
Gronsdöl, 70
Guarneri, 104
Gude, Hans, 21, 33
Gudebrandsdal, 41
Gudbrandsdalen, 148
Gudvangen, 140, 154
Gulathing, 72
Gundulph, 58
Gunner 282

Haakon, 73, 139, 165, 219, 278
Hafsfjord, 59, 61
Hake, 13
Hakluyt, 253
Halden, 5
Haldor, 99
Halling, 84
Hallingdal, 35
Hamar, 39, 40
Hammerfest, 248, 249
Hammer Store, 39
Hampstead, Morten, 40
Hanekanob, 76
Hangse, Lensmand C. J., 73
Hansa, 113, 115
Hansen, Carl Sundt, 21, 30
—— Andr. M., 239
Hanskuld, 283, 284, 285
Harald Fairhair, 278
—— Haardrada, 21, 214
—— Haarfagre, 57, 59, 202, 206, 207
Hasvik, 247
Haugen, Hans, 258
—— Ole, 79
Haugesund, 59
Haven, Astre, 56
—— Nestre, 56
Heftye, Villa, 34
Heimskringan, 35
Hel, 303
Helfring, 303
Helgi, 282, 284
Hellesaeterbrae, 171
Hempl, 197
Herodotus, 35
Herschel, Sir John, 40
Hertfordshire, 39
Hervard, 14
Hervör, 13, 15, 16
Hestmann, 224
Heyerdahl, Hans, 25, 26
Hildal, 70
Hildalfos, 70
Himingloefa, 303
Hjalmar, 15, 16
Hjorvard, 14
Hoff, Major, 65
Holberg, Ludvig, 36
Holefos, 174
Holmenkolbakken, 35
Holmenkollen, 32, 34, 35
Holmguist, Mr. P. J., 270
Hop, 124, 134
Horedö, 33
Horgheim, 179
Horland, 64
Hornelen, 168
Hornindalsvand, 168
Hornklof, 278
Hotel, Fletcher's, 140
—— Hardanger, 69, 71
—— Sandven, 81
Hrönn, 303, 305
Hudiksvalla, 181
Huldreslaater, 81
Hummicky ice, 301
Hurling, 303
Hydalshorn, 177
Hyrning, 88, 97, 100

Ibsen, 189
—— Henrik, 26, 36, 37, 51
—— Knud, 51
Ice Age, 63
—— pack, 301
Idne Samlen, 63
Ilissus, 31
Infanticide, 27
Invik, 168
Island, Frederick Jackson, 149
Isle de France, 289, 290
Ivar, the Viking, 138

Jacobsen, Schoolmaster, 22, 23
Jäderen, 57
Jadki, 248
Jagter, 117
Jambadi, 95, 99
Jardalsnut, 151
Jardine, Sir Henry, 40
Jarl, Eirik, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 101
—— Sigvaldi, 89
Jarlsberg-Laurvik, 257
Joachim, 104
Johan, King Carl, 29, 30
Johansen, 49
Jomfru Marias Synaal, 59
Jordal, 70
Jotnar, 34, 276
Jötunheim, 279
Jurassic Times, 271
Justedal, 85, 225

Karmo, 58
Karmösund, 59
Keary, Mr. C. F., 278, 280
Keesa, 53
Ketil Flatnose, 280
Kielland, Alexander, 36, 189
Kingedalsvard, 68
Kingerike, 44
Kjendal, 173
Kjendalsbrae, 171
Kjerulf, Halfdan, 30, 84, 131
Kjondalfos, 70
Kleivafos, 174
Klipfisk, 228
Knivsflaa, 178
Knut, King, 212

Labrador, 9
Laeffler, Martin, 80
Lagaboter, Magnus, 139, 215
Laing, Mr., 141
Lakes, Bandak, 52
La Mara, 128
Lampieri, 105
Land, Franz Joseph's, 49
Landnama-bok, 280
Langedal, 134
Langley, 39
Lanshorn, 178
Lapithæ, 31
Lapp, 54, 235, 236, 238, 239, 240, 241, 249
Larus glaucus, 298
Laurvik, 48
Laurwig, 272
Laxvarp, 161
League, Hanseatic, 110, 111, 113
Lemming, The, 227, 260
Lensmand, 74
Lerchenfeld, Lerche, 64
Lie, Jonas, 27, 106, 189
Lillehammer, 40
Lindemann, 84
Lindisnäs, 56
Linnæa borealis, 264
Lister, 56
Listermandal, 57
Liszt, 103, 131, 132
Ljonäs Aus, 63
Llakhof, 49
Lodge, Richard, 113
Loen, 168, 169, 171, 173
Loendal, 169
Loenvand, 172
Lofjeld, 169
Lofoten Islands, 25, 225, 226
Loithus, 149
Londeman, Edvard, 64
Longen, 41
Lopos String, 149
Lotefos, 70
Loveid, Locks of, 52
Lübeck, 112
Ludwig, 64
Lund, 56
Luther, 37
Lutheran, 37
Lyall, Edna, 160
Lyngen, 234, 235, 247, 248
Lyngso, 62

Maekir, 15
Magnus of Norway, 114
Magnus, Olaus, 262
Magnusson, Eystein, 215
—— Haakon, 141
Majorstuen, 32
Malibran, Madame, 104, 105
Marchus, Baron, 65
Marconigraph, 251
Maundrapsthing, 72
Mazias, 57
Medaas, 81
Melaanfos, 63
Melheimsnib, 171
Menglöd, 278
Meridianstötte, 251
Merok, 169, 174, 175
Métropole, Hotel, 102
Meyer, Johan, 139
Michelsen, Hans, 29, 30, 33
Middelthun, 30
Midstuen, 32
Milford, Mr., 253
Miosen, Lake, 38, 39, 44
Mjolnir, 276
Molde, 24, 184, 185, 186
Mongefos, 181
Mongegjura, 181
Mork, 42
"Morn, The Resurrection," 24
Munarvag, 16
Mundal, 155
Munich, 24, 25

Munthe, Gerhard, 25, 33, 165

Name-fastening, 137
Nansen, 48, 49, 50, 219, 238, 250
Naze, 56
Naenerkout, 50
Naerodals-Elv, 145
Naesdal, 171, 172, 173
Naesodtangen, 8
Nefja, Thorkel, 88
Neolithic man, 274
Nestan, 134
Neuport, Edmund, 36
Nicolaysen, Mr., 5
Nilson, Isak, 81
Nissen, Lie, 36
Njal, Burnt, 281, 282, 283
No Man's Land, 245
Nonsnib, 171, 173, 174
Nordaasvand, 124
Nordfjord, 117
Nordkap, 255
Nordland, 230
Nordraak, Richard, 130, 131
Nordsjo, 52
Nordsjo, Tellemarken, 52
Nornir, 306
Norse, 64, 107
—— Chief, 13
—— Pilot, 3
Norseman, A Hardy, 160
Norsk, 85
Norway, 25, 39, 40, 44, 47, 56, 58, 64, 65, 70, 71, 73, 75, 84, 85, 87, 106
—— flowers of, 263
—— forest growth of, 257
—— gods of, 199
—— natural history of, 252
Norwegian beer, 173
—— consuls, 218
—— kings, 191
—— sheep, 152
—— timber vessel, 5
Notere, The, 6
Notitia, 199
Novgorod, Nishni, 111

Obsenfjeld, 73
Odde, 65, 69, 70
Odin, 164, 195, 276, 279
Ofsthus Fos, 82
Oksen Beacon, 73
Oksenfjeld, 74
Oksen Headland, 74
Olaf, Haraldsson, 212
—— King, 87, 90, 92, 93, 100, 101
—— Kyree, 215
—— Prince, 34, 119
—— St., 161, 212
Olden, 168
Ols, Thora, 42
Olsen, 66, 112
Oldstatter, Thora, 42
Oscar, King, 218
Oscarsborg, 8
Oscarshal, 19, 20, 23
"Ost, Gammel," 44
Ostade, 17
Östensö, 63
Ostero, 134
Otteraa, 56

Paris, 25, 27
Painters, 19
Painting, School of, 17
Parthenon, 29, 31
Patti, Adelina, 106
Pepys, Samuel, 119
Phidias, 28
Pilot, Norse, 3
—— The, 4
Pipervik, 35
Plads, Eidsvolds, 30
Plaidy, 129
Plants, Flowering, 292
Polska, 84, 85
Pontoppidan, 222, 252
Porphyry, 8
Porsgrund, 50
Potter, 17
Promontory, 8
Prose Edda, 195
Powel, Mr., 277
Powell, Sir G. Baden, 250

Quay, German, 110
—— Vaagen, 109

Ramsey, Colonel, 180
Ran, 302
Ranger, 8
Ratnaeshaugen, 185

Rauma, 179, 181
Ravenfjeld, 171
Recherche Bay, 289, 293, 300
Red Bay, 290
Reinald, Bishop, 57
Reindeer, 260
Rembrandt, 17
Rignavök, 279
Roches Moutonnées, 273
Rochester, Knights' Hall, 58
Rodal, 171
Rödi, 171
Rome, 39
Romsdal, 179, 248
Romsdalhorn, 179, 183, 185
Röraas, 181
Rosenberg, 18, 29
Rosendal, Barons of, 64
Rosenkrantz, 113, 118
Rosenkrone, Baron, 64, 65
"Rou, The Ballad of," 204
Röver, 62
Rule, Danish, 36
Runakedlo, 74
Runatal, 162
Runic Stone, 74
Russell, Scott, 48
Russia, 246
Ruysdael, 17

Saathorn, 174
Sabine, Sir Ed., 251
Saeter, 42, 47
Saeter, Mork, 42
Saetarsdal, 53, 54, 55, 56
Saga, Fornmanna, 101
—— Frithjof, 161
—— The Halfred, 210
—— Hervarar, 16
—— Holmsnega, 280
—— Olaf's, Saint, 13
—— Olaf Tryggvason's, 101
—— Skjöldunga, 200
—— Staurlang's, 200
Sagas, 71, 87, 279
Salundare, 144
Samle Nut, 63
Sandefjord, 5
Sandenib, 171
Sandven, 66, 69, 75
Sandwich, Lord, 119
Saxifraga, 291
Schjelderup, 131
School, Norwegian, 25
Schumann, 128
Schweigaard, 30
Scotland, 56
Seiland, Island of, 248
Selmer, 36
"Semiramide," 9
Serpent, Long, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100
Serpent, Short, 92, 94
Seven Sisters, 223, 224
Siberia, 49
Siegfried, 277
Siggen, 60
Sigmund, 87, 283, 284
Sigurd, 12
Sinclair, Captain, 180
Sinding, Christian, 25
—— Otto, 24, 25, 30, 36
—— Stephen, 25, 29, 37, 103
"Sisters, The Two," 25
Sivelfos, 151
Skaalebrae, 171
Skaalfjeld, 171
Skagerak, The, 2, 48, 53, 181
Skagevak, 86
Skarphedinn, 282, 283, 284
Skarsfos, 70
Skaw, The, 2
Skeibrok, Mathias, 30
Skien, 51, 52
Skiens-Elv, 50
Skiolld, 284
Skjaeggedal, 68, 70
Skjalden, 144
Skjalgsson, Erling, 88, 89
Skjöldunga Branch, 201
Skougumsaas, 8
Skudesnäs, 61
Skuld, 138
Sleipnir, 276
Smidt, Dr., 121
Snorro Sturleson, 213
Sogne, 144, 154
Sognefest, 144
Sogur, Fornmanna, 87
Sondefos, 67
Soot, Eyolf, 27
Sör, The, 68
Soro, Island of, 248
—— Sund, 247

Spitzbergen, 288, 292
Spohr, 104
Springdans, 84
Stabbur, 46
Stalheim, 147
Stalheimsfos, 151
Stallari, Kolbjörn, 100, 101
Staubacks, 181
Stavanger, 57
Stavekirke, 29
Steen, Jan, 17
Steilene, 8
Stemmestad, 8
Stephenson, Robert, 40
Stolkjaerre, 147, 174
Stone, 9
Stone Age, 275
Storfos, 174, 177
Störhammer, 40
Storo, 62
Storsaeterfos, 174
Storthing, 217, 218
Stotte-Harolds, 58
Strandebarms Bugt, 63
Strandsfos, 70
Strauss, Richard, 80
"Strephon," 78, 79, 80
Sturlasson, Snorre, 35
Sulen-Oer, 144
Sullivan, Sir Arthur, 129
Sundal, 66, 69
Suphelle, 155, 158
Svafreame, 14
Svarteunt, 70
Svartien, 224, 225
Svein, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95
Svendsen, Johan, 36, 132, 133
Sverdrup, Otto, 250
Svipdag, 278
Svold, Battle of, 87
Sweden, 246
Swithin, St., 58
Synaal, Jomfru Marias, 59

Taylor, Isaac, 197
—— Franklin, 129
Teddiman, 120
Telemarken, 4, 34, 46, 69, 76, 84
Telemarken, Sydl, 48
Teuton, 175
Thaulow, Fritz, 25, 27
Theatre, National, 37
Theseus, 71, 72, 73
Things, 71, 72, 73
Thingstead, 7
Thingsvöll, 72
Thomasson, 304, 305
Thompson, Captain, 58, 225
Thor, 98, 276, 279
Thorgeir, 88, 100
Thorkel, 98, 99
Thorvaldsen, 28, 29, 30
Thursar, 276
Tidemand, Adolf, 20, 21, 33
Tiundaland, View of, 100
Tjeme, 6
Tjoflat, 74
Tokheim, 69
Tokheimfos, 69
Tonsberg, 6
Torenut, 82
Torfisk, 228
Tor Stuen, 185
Torv, Stör, 88
Tostig, King, 214
Triassic, The, 271
Troldhaugen, 126, 134
Trollhätten, 52
Trollhaven, 181
Trolls, 79
Troltinderne, 185
Tromsö, 235
Tromsö Sund, 230
Trondhjem, 71, 191, 193, 234
—— Cathedral of, 29, 57, 191
Tryfing, 13, 15
Tryggvason, Olaf, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 111, 209, 210
Tuscany, Grand Duke of, 105
Tydskalbryggen, 100, 113

Ud, 303
Ulf, 92, 93, 100
Ulbriken, 102
Upsal, 39
Urd, 138
Useaföt, Thorstein, 99, 100
Utkjel, 74
Utne, 73
Utrecht, 8
Utsire, 62

Vaagen, 111, 118

Valhalla, 279
Valhöll, 276
Valkendorf, Christopher, 115
Valkyrie, 227
Valle, 54, 55
Van de Velde, 117, 118
Vangsvand, 142
Vapnathing, 72
Vardekolle, 8
Veblungsnäs, 180
Vectis, 1, 33, 41, 146, 169, 174, 293, 298, 302
Veien, Keiser Wilhelms, 34
Vermeer, 17
Vernandi, 138, 139
Vikin, Men of, 88
Viking, 87, 137, 275
Viking Age, 10, 276
Viking Rolf Ganger, 204
Vikings' ships, 9, 17
Viola hanieârnis, 255
"Virgins, Five Foolish," 59
Visnaes, 168, 169
Vnglinga Saga, 13
Volsung Atila, 277
Voluspâ, 279
Voss, 121, 138, 140, 143
Vosse-Elv, 136
Vossevangen, 136, 140
Vrangfos, 52, 53

Wagner, 80
Walrus, 50
Wentegel, Gustav, 27
Wentzel, Gustav, 25
Wenzel, 129
Werenskiold, 25, 26, 27
Wergeland, 30
Wessel, Peter, 216
William, Mattieu, 42
Wimmer, 196
Winchester, 58
Woden, 276
Woodmen, 51
Woods, Bergen and Tromsö, 256

Yacht, Royal, 154
Yarrell, 294
Yodl, 43
Ytre, 63
Ytre Samlen, 63

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